The LIBRARY of
DARTMOUTH-COLLEGE

EDWIN ❀ DAVID ❀ SANBORN ❀ 1832 ❀
PROFESSOR of BELLES-LETTRES
-LIBRARIAN
IN MEMORIAM

SANBORN-LIBRARY-FUND
ESTABLISHED BY
EDWIN-WEBSTER-SANBORN-1878

Discarded by
Dartmouth College Library

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/historyofspanish0012post_g6n7

HARVARD–RADCLIFFE FINE ARTS SERIES

A HISTORY OF SPANISH PAINTING

VOLUME XII — PART I

A HISTORY OF SPANISH PAINTING

BY

CHANDLER RATHFON POST
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

VOLUME XII — PART I

THE CATALAN SCHOOL IN THE EARLY RENAISSANCE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1958

Discarded by
Dartmouth College Library

© COPYRIGHT, 1958
BY THE PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

Art
Ref.
ND
801
.P6
V.12, pt. 1

Distributed in Great Britain by
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON

768.46
P845h
v. 12, pt. 1

Art
Apr. 25. 1958

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER 30–7776
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF VOLUME XII[1]

Ainaud de Lasarte, Juan, Unpublished article on Catalan painting of the sixteenth century (see below, p. 4, n. 1).

Alcolea Gil, Santiago, *El retablo de San Eloy de los plateros de Barcelona,* Barcelona, 1956.

Angulo Íñiguez, Diego, *Durero y los pintores catalanes del siglo XVI, Archivo español de arte,* XVII (1944), 327–330.

——— *El pintor gerundense Porta, Archivo español de arte,* XVII (1944), 341–359.

——— *Pintura del Renacimiento,* vol. XII in the series *Ars Hispaniae,* Madrid, 1954.

Arnet, Román, *Excursió col-lectiva á Premiá de Dalt, Butlletí de la Associació d'Excursións Catalana,* IV (1882), 13–16.

Aru, Carlo, *Architettura, scultura e pittura in Sardegna,* in the volume of Sardinian studies by various authors, *Celebrazioni sarde,* Urbino, 1938, pp. 455–485.

——— *Un documento definitivo per l'identificazione di G. Barcelo, Annali della Facoltà di Filosofia e Lettere della R. Università di Cagliari,* III (1930–1931), 169–178.

——— *L'identificazione di Giovanni Barcels,* the Sardinian periodical, *il Nuraghe,* I (1923), no. 4, pp. 4–5.

——— *"Maestro Pietro Sardo"* (Cavaro), the Sardinian perodical *il Nuraghe,* II (1924), no. 14, pp. 5–7.

——— *La pittura sarda nel Rinascimento, Archivio storico sardo,* XV (1924), 3–25; and XVI (1926), 161–223.

——— *La pittura sarda nei secoli XV e XVI, Atti del X Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte in Roma,* pp. 263–269 (Congress held in 1912 but volume not published until 1922 at Rome).

Benaprés, Carolina, *L'antic retaule de Santa María* (Sitges), *L'Amic de les arts* (Sitges), August 31, 1927, pp. 78–80.

Bertaux, Émile, *La diablesse et l'évêque, Un miracle de Saint André, Revue archéologique,* XI (1908), 16–24 (for the St. Andrew retable by the St. Felix Master).

Biehl, Walther, *Kunstgeschichtliche Streifzüge durch Sardinien, Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst,* XXIV (1912–13), 26–32.

Bofill, Pedro, *Sant Esteve de Granollers, Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Vich,* XVII (1924), 176–178.

---

[1] In addition to the works on Catalan painting listed in the bibliographies of former volumes.

Capeille, Jean, *Dictionnaire de biographies roussillonnaises*, Perpignan, 1914.

Carbonell y Gener, José, *El retaule major de l'antiga parròquia* (Sitges), *L'Amic de les arts* (Sitges), April 30, 1927, pp. 33–34.

——— *Un quatrecentista napolità a Catalunya, Filiació de les taules de Sant Eloi del Museu de Barcelona, L'Amic de les arts* (Sitges), May 31, 1927, pp. 37–40.

Crabu, Maria, *Il Polittico di Ardara*, an as yet unpublished thesis for the doctorate in the University of Cagliari, 1954.

Delogu, Raffaele, Article on restoration of certain Sardinian paintings, *Le arti*, V (1942–1943), 44–53.

——— *Lineamenti di storia artistica* (of Sardinia), in *Sardegna*, in the series *Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano*, Milan, 1952, pp. 43–66.

——— *Il "Maestro di Olzai" e le origini della Scuola di Stampace, Studi sardi*, VI (1942–1944), 3–21.

——— *Michele Cavaro, Studi sardi*, III (1937), 5–88.

——— *Primitivi spagnuoli nella pinacoteca di Cagliari, Le vie d'Italia*, XLVII (1941), 1232–1241.

Durán y Sanpere, Agustín, *Mestre Jeronim Rua, de Montblanch, i un frare mercedari, pintors de retaule, Butlletí arqueològic* (Tarragona), no. 45, July–September, 1933, pp. 265–270.

——— *Noticia d'uns pintors del segle XVI, Els Alegret de Cervera, Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, XI (1923), 88–107.

——— *El pintor Joan Pau Guardiola, Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya*, XXXI (1921), 11–20.

——— *Un Retaule de Sant Sever exiliat i repatriat, Vida cristiana*, XVI (1928–1929), 383–389 and 419–427.

Durliat, Marcel, *Arts anciens du Roussillon, Peinture*, Perpignan, 1954.

Duverger, Josef, and Onghena, M. J., and Van Daalen, P. K., *Nieuwe gegevens aangaande XVI^{de} eeuwse beeldhouwers in Brabant en Vlanderen*, in *Medelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie*, XV (1953), no. 2.

Ferrando Roig, Juan, *La Virgen del Vinyet (Sitges)*, Barcelona, 1941.

Filia, Domenico, *Pittori del Rinascimento in Sassari*, in the periodical *La Nuova Sardegna*, XXXIV, 1924, no. 243.

Folch y Torres, J., *Un retaule inèdit del Renaixement, Gaseta de les arts*, August 1, 1925, p. 4 (referring to the Miracle of the Gentleman of Cologne which I ascribe to Manuel Ferrando).

Font, Lamberto, *Gerona, La Catedral y el Museo Diocesano*, Gerona, 1952.

Font, Melcior, and Pujol y Casademont, Pedro, *Andorra*, in the series of books on the parts of Catalonia called *Album Meravella*, Barcelona, 1930.

Gallardo, Antonio, *Sant Pere de Vilamajor, Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya*, XLVIII (1938), 178–184.

Gandía, Emilio, *Pintures al dors dels retaules del gremi d'argenters, Butlletí dels Museus d'Art de Barcelona*, November, 1931, pp. 186–188.

Gispert y Ferrater, Joaquín, *Un retablo gótico* (Argentona), *Boletín de la Asociación Artístico-arqueológica Barcelonesa*, December, 1891, pp. 107–109; January, 1892, pp. 7–11; and February, 1892, pp. 134–137.

González y Sugranes, Miguel, *Contribució a la historia dels antichs gremis dels arts y oficis de la ciutat de Barcelona*, Barcelona, 1915.

Gudiol y Cunill, Josef, *Mestre Joan Gascó, Estudis universitaris catalans*, I (1907), 281–301, 358–381, and II (1908), 13–38. Reprinted as a small, separate book, Barcelona, 1908.

——— *Noves obres del pintor Joan Gascó*, in the Barcelona newspaper, *La Veu de Catalunya*, December 10, 1911 (Pàgina artistica, no. 103).

——— *Un retaule de Joan Gascó, Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Vich*, I (1912–1914), 46–48.

Gudiol Ricart, José, with collaborators, *Cataluña*, Barcelona, 1955.

——— *Historia de la pintura en Cataluña*, Madrid, 1956(?).

Guide historique et descriptif de la Cathédrale Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Perpignan, anonymously published at Perpignan in 1916.

Guiu, Joaquim, *El retaule de la parròquia de Sant Just i Pastor de Barcelona, Vida cristiana*, XIX (1931–1932), 195–200.

Levi, Ezio, *Fortune e avventure di artefici italiani in Catalogna, Atti della Reale Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti* (Nuova serie), Naples, XII (1931–1932), 183–206.

Madrazo, Pedro de, *Pintura mural en la Almoyna de Barcelona, Museo español de antigüedades*, V, 93–108.

Madurell, José María, *El arte en la comarca alta de Urgel*, series of articles in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, III, 4 (1945) to IV, 3–4 (1946).

——— *Los contratos de obras en los protocolos notariales y su aportación á la historia de la arquitectura, Estudios históricos y documentos de los Archivos de Protocolos, Colegio Notarial de Barcelona*, I (1948), 105–199.

——— *Pedro Nunyes y Enrique Fernandes, Pintores de retablos (Notas para la historia de la pintura catalana de la primera mitad del siglo XVI)*, series of four articles in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943) to II, 3 (1944).

——— *El pintor Pedro Nunyes y el retablo de San Eloy de los Plateros de Barcelona, Museu* (Portuguese periodical), VI (1950), 131–150.

Marqués Casanovas, Jaime, *Guía del Museo Diocesano de Gerona*, Gerona, 1955.

Moliné y Brasés, Ernest, *Alguns documents inèdits pera la historia de la pintura catalana, Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, VII (1913–1914), 90–101.

Monsalvatje y Fossas, Francisco, *Nomenclator histórico de las iglesias parroquiales y rurales, santuarios y capillas de la provincia de Gerona*, Olot, 1908.

Pach, Pedro, *Excursió de l'Ésera a l'Isábena a travers del Turbón, Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya*, XXXIII (1923), 229–246.

Pinyes, Ramón, *Un pintor tarragoní a Vallmoll*, in the periodical *Tarragona i el camp*, 1934, no. 5, p. 8.

Pujol y Tubáu, Pedro, *L'Església de la Pietat de la Seu d'Urgell, Analecta sacra tarraconensia*, I (1925), 331–352.

——— *Notes i documents sobre construcció de retaules en l'alt pais d'Urgell*, in *Homenatge a Antoni Rubió i Lluch*, Barcelona, 1936, II, 463–489.

Ráfols, José F., *Diccionario biográfico de artistas de Cataluña*, Barcelona, I–II, 1951–53.

Reis Santos, Luís, *Pedro Nunes, pintor portugues do século XVI, Diário de Lisbon*, September 29, 1940. Republished in his *Estudos de pintura antiga*, Lisbon, 1943, pp. 247–249.

Sacs, J., *Un retrat de l'antipapa Luna, Vell i nou*, October 15, 1917, p. 599 (for Martín de Soria).

Segarra, Ferran de, *Un nou retaule de Joan Gascò*, in the Barcelona newspaper *La Veu de Catalunya*, October 12, 1911 (Pàgina artística, no. 95).

Serra Vilaró, Juan, *Notas de archivo sobre cosas de arte, Boletín Arqueológico*, Tarragona, L (1950), 136–150.

——— *Tres pintores desconocidos, uno ciertamente de Valls y otro probable, Boletín Arqueológico, Tarragona*, XLIII (1943), 80–87.

Solá, Fortiá, *Historia de Torelló*, Barcelona, I–II (1947–1948).

Spano, Giovanni, *Guida della città e dintorni di Cagliari*, Cagliari, 1861.

Sutrá Viñas, Juan, *Las obras de restauración realizadas en la iglesia parroquial de San Pedro de Montagut*, Figueras, 1930.

——— *El retaule de Montagut*, in the periodical *Santa Maria del Mont* (published at the Catalan shrine thus called), September 15, 1929, pp. 1–3.

——— TVMAS, *Pintor renaixentista*, series of articles in the *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya*, XLVII (1937), August, October, November, and December.

——— *Las tablas renacentistas de Millás, Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*, 1950, pp. 183–190.

——— *El Nacimiento de Jesús en dos pinturas del Renacimiento, Canigó* (periodical of Figueras), December, 1956.

——— *Contribución al estudio de la obra de un pintor renacentista*, to be published in vol. XI of *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Gerundenses.*

Taramelli, Antonio, *Guida del Museo Nazionale di Cagliari*, in *Archivio storico sardo*, X (1914), 264–379.

Taramelli, Antonio, and Delogu, Raffaele, *Il R. Museo Nazionale e la Pinacoteca di Cagliari*, Rome, 1936.

Valls y Vicens, Joseph María, *Torna-bous, L'Excursionista* (Associació Catalanista d'Excursions Científicas), II (1882–1886), 342–343.

Verrié, Federico Pablo, *La iglesia de los Santos Justo y Pastor* (Barcelona), Barcelona, 1944.

Viladrich Gaspar, Jaime, *Memoria histórico-descriptiva de la Imágen y Santuario de Nuestra Señora del Milagro, de Riner*, in the volume *Certamen público celebrado por la Academia Bibliográfico-Mariana* (Lérida), Lérida, 1897.

Vilaseca Anguera, Salvador, *La pesta de l'any 1530 i el pintor Jaume Segarra de Reus*, Reus, 1952.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION 3

SECTION I — FOREIGN AND PRESUMPTIVELY FOREIGN PAINTERS WITH THEIR FOLLOWERS

CHAPTER II

JUAN GASCÓ

1. Bibliography, Style, and Sources 11
2. Documented Works 17
3. Undocumented Works Recognized by Gudiol, together with a Few Possibly Related Panels not Attributed by Him 35
4. Undocumented Works not Registered by Gudiol 47

CHAPTER III

PERRIS FONTAYNES 69

CHAPTER IV

THE ST. FELIX MASTER (JOAN DE BURGUNYA?)

1. His Identity 78
2. His Works 81

CHAPTER V

THE SCHOOL OF THE ST. FELIX MASTER

1. The Catalan Monogrammist (Pedro Mates?) 123
2. Other Works of the St. Felix Master's Circle 155

CHAPTER VI

NICOLÁS DE CREDENSA 163

CHAPTER VII

PEDRO NUNYES AND ENRIQUE FERNANDES

1. Introduction 169
2. Biographies of the Two Masters 169
3. The Problem of Separating the Style of Fernandes from that of Nunyes 177

4. The Extant Paintings by Nunyes (in Some Instances in Collaboration with Fernandes, Who Probably acted as a Mere Assistant) . . 179
5. A Work by Enrique Fernandes 203

SECTION II — INDIGENOUS PAINTERS

CHAPTER VIII

JAIME FORNER

1. His Biography 209
2. The Works of Forner 214

CHAPTER IX

PEDRO GASCÓ 231

CHAPTER X

JAIME FONTANET THE ELDER 261

CHAPTER XI

LESSER CATALAN PAINTERS OF THE PERIOD

1. Juan Gatón 265
2. The Premiá Master (Bernardo Goffer, Jerónimo Goffer, or Antonio Marqués?) 271
3. The Balaguer Master 280
4. The Rosary Master 285
5. The Master of the Four Saints 290

CHAPTER XII

PAINTERS AT GERONA BESIDES THOSE DISCUSSED IN SECTION I

1. The Lladó Master 296
2. The Master of the Scala Salutis 310

CHAPTER XIII

TARRAGONA

1. Jaime Segarra 317
2. The Master of Pedro de Cardona 319
3. Master Oliva (Francisco Olives?) 332
4. The Alforja Master (Francisco Ribes?) 341

CHAPTER XIV

WESTERN CATALONIA

1. The Javierre Master 353
2. The Canillo Master (Juan Llobet or Pedro Alegret?) 364
3. The School of the Canillo Master, Especially the Saneja Master . . 379
4. The Son Master 389

CHAPTER XV

ROUSSILLON AND CERDAGNE 395

CHAPTER XVI

MAJORCA

1. Manuel Ferrando 433
2. The Campofranco Master 445
3. The Master of Edward VII 447
4. A Follower of Alonso de Sedano in Majorca 457

CHAPTER XVII

SARDINIA

1. Introduction 460
2. The More Conservative Painters of the Early Sixteenth Century . 470
3. Pedro Cavaro 493

CHAPTER XVIII

CATALAN PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY RENAISSANCE BUT OF UNCERTAIN ATTRIBUTION 524

APPENDIX

ADDITIONS TO VOLUMES I–XI

Jaime and Pedro Serra 555
Pedro Baró 560
Borrassá and his School 560
The Camélas Master (Francisco Ferrer?) 566
Bernardo Martorell 570
The Roussillon Master 573
The St. Basilissa Master 577
The Fontanals Master 579
Guillermo Talarn 581
The Villahermosa Master 582

The Liria Master 585
Gonzalo Pérez (the Martín de Torres Master) 593
The Gil Master (Miguel Alcañiz?) 597
The Loert Master and the Master of the Privilegios 598
The Inca Master 599
The Galiana Master 599
The Langa Master 601
Benito Arnaldín 601
Nicolás Solana 604
The Lanaja Master 606
The Burnham Master 609
The Torralba Master 609
Juan de Sevilla (Johannes Hispalensis) 611
Juan de Flandes 615
The Robredo Master 630
Carillo 633
The Payá Master and Works of Other Hispano-Flemish Masters in Andalusia 635
The Altura Master 646
The Master of the Valencian Hospital 648
Rodrigo de Osona the Younger 650
The Perea Master 658
Jaime Huguet 663
Gabriel Guardia 667
Arnaldo Gassies 667
The Marinyans Master 670
The Canapost Master 673
Antonio de Llonye 681
Valentín Montolíu 684
Miguel del Rey 687
The Bacri Master 687
The Alfajarín Master 687
The Oslo Master 695
Martín de Soria 695
Juan de la Abadía the Elder and the Younger and Francisco Baget . . 704
Pedro Berruguete 716
Pedro Delgado 722
B. Del Castro 725
The Becerril Master 727
Master Alejo (the Sirga Master) 731
The Astorga Master 733
The Sinobas Master 733
Andalusian Works of the Early Renaissance at Cordova 737
Pedro Machuca 740
Johannes Hispanus 745
The Cuenca Master 746

Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina and Fernando de Llanos 750
Felipe Pablo 755
The Alcira Master 755

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR VOLUMES I–XI 765

INDEX OF NAMES OF ARTISTS 771

INDEX OF PLACES 776

Part I

THE CATALAN SCHOOL IN THE EARLY RENAISSANCE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The statement generally made by historians of Spanish art to the effect that at the commencement of the Renaissance the Catalan school of painting began to decline from the preëminence which it had enjoyed throughout the Middle Ages is true only in a limited and particular sense. Production continued as copious as in the past, some of it high in quality, but the difference was that we owe a large amount of it to foreigners from Navarre, Portugal, Naples, and northern Europe, indeed the best of it if we think of Pedro Nunyes and are willing to equate the St. Felix Master with Joan de Burgunya. This intrusion had started at the end of the fifteenth century with, for example, the Andalusian Bermejo, the German Anye Bru, and, of lesser calibre, the Castilian Pedro Bello, but in the Quattrocento quite as notable distinction had attached to the major part of the pictorial output which was characteristically Catalan and under the indigenous control of Huguet and the atelier of the Vergós family, not to speak of the but slightly less gifted followers of these artists. During the Renaissance the preserved works and even more the archives show that a very great number of native painters enjoyed extensive patronage, and yet, so far as our information goes and if, as is likely, the St. Felix Master was an alien, they yielded somewhat in attainments to the foreign colony, even although we do not overlook the most talented of the indigenous group, such men as Jaime Forner and the Catalan Monogrammist.

The reasons for the rise and fall of movements in art are doubtless multiple and often misunderstood, eluding our knowledge or acumen, but the most plausible guess for the partial decadence of local proficiency in Catalonia is the beginning of the loss of independence through the contemporary tendency to the centralization of Spain about the Castilian court. Great art has flourished under despotisms as in France of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or in western Spain itself during the rule of the second, third, and fourth Philips, but the impairment of the free spirit of a whole region, as in Catalonia from the sixteenth century onward, because of subordination to a distant government, is likely to detract from the stimulus to magnanimous achievement. In the other sections of the peninsula the temper of liberty had run less high, so that the increased centralization was not so much of a change from prior conditions or so deeply felt a shock to indigenous artistic effort. The result was that even in Aragon and Valencia with its territory, i.e., in the other divisions of what had been the separate, eastern kingdom, pictorial creation remained in the hands of local aspirants. Indeed Valencia now and henceforth produced, or was the residence of, some of the most renowned names in the annals of Spanish art.

Barcelona maintained its prestige as the focus and training school of the painters of Catalonia, constituting their most usual residence. So far as may be judged by what is extant, Gerona and its province furnished a richer field for painters even than in the past; but some of the actual monuments were executed by men employed at Barcelona and in other parts of the Catalan domain, and the person who deserves the credit for the finest works of the period at Gerona and in its environs, the St. Felix Master, if, as is nearly certain, identical with Joan de Burgunya, was at least for a considerable time one of Barcelona's citizens. Nevertheless, the native painter for whom I have coined the pseudonym of the Catalan Monogrammist seems to have centered in the province of Gerona, enjoying an enormous popularity as he filled the district with his altarpieces, and the eminent scholar, Juan Ainaud de Lasarte,[1] has extracted from the archives a long array of painters dwelling at or near Gerona during the period who cannot be connected with any still existing production but who, like the Monogrammist, prove that the city formed, in Catalonia, one of the lesser spots of artistic fermentation. Vich also obtained distinction as a place of pictorial significance through the presence of the shop of the Gascó family. Nor can it be doubted that Tarragona, with its province, enjoyed a separate artistic life, because, although it bestowed at least a single commission upon the St. Felix Master and although one of its painters, the Alforja Master, may be the same as a Francisco Ribes of Barcelona, it possessed a nucleus of its own manipulators of the brush in such men as Jaime Segarra, Master Oliva, and the Master of Pedro de Cardona. Likewise, western Catalonia, with its capitals of Lérida in the south and La Seo de Urgel in the north, while occasionally attracting artists from Barcelona, extended its favors to groups of local painters, especially the Canillo Master. Roussillon and Cerdagne, still sections of the Catalan domain, did not lose their connection with painting south of the Pyrenees, inasmuch, for instance, as Jaime Forner and Antonio Peytaví found employment on both sides of the present border between France and eastern Spain, and yet the two northern provinces were the homes of largely independent, autochthonous subdivisions of the whole Catalan school, less subject to French influence than would have been expected.

---

[1] Note 11 in a brilliant article, the manuscript of a lecture, a general account of Catalan painting of the sixteenth century. With his habitual magnanimity he has sent me a typed copy of the article, to which I shall often wish to refer in these pages.

More directly dependent on the tutelage and style of Barcelona was the commendable production of Sardinia, which continued to belong to Spain. There has been a very prevalent and rather pernicious tendency to look upon the painting of the island in the period that now concerns us as turning more and more to Italy for its models; but even the outstanding Sardinian member of the profession, Pedro Cavaro, imitated the example of his predecessors of the fifteenth century by spending an apprenticeship at Barcelona, and, although in his full maturity he inclined in greater degree to the manner of the High Renaissance, he became no more Italianate than his compeers in Catalonia proper. In the subsequent chapter on Sardinia, even more than in former volumes, we shall adduce evidence for the intimate ties with Catalan art in the Quattrocento; but by the end of this century the granting of commissions to celebrities in Catalonia had pretty well ceased, and the local Sardinian painters had evolved enough competence to have trained some others without sending them all to the mother country. Indeed, the majority of works at the beginning of the sixteenth century reveal more or less indebtedness to the chief boast of late mediaeval painting in Sardinia, the Castelsardo Master, who himself, however, may actually have been born in Catalonia and, as we shall perceive on a later page, was certainly there active for a time. Howbeit, so far as a local school existed on the island, it ran closely parallel to the modes of the Spanish east coast. Curiously enough, Majorca, though nearer than Sardinia to Catalonia, owed pictorially more in the Cinquecento to Valencia whose modes in the previous century had disputed with Barcelona for the favor of the islanders. Moreover, the standard of production plainly degenerated, generally speaking, from the interesting achievements of Majorca in the Quattrocento. The most significant of the painters active in the island at the commencement of the sixteenth century, Manuel Ferrando, who perhaps even was born in western Spain, is definitely known to have sojourned in Italy and brought thence to Palma an Umbro-Florentine style, little adulterated by any native aesthetic tendencies.

Like even the best painters in the other Spanish centres during the phase of development treated in this and my recent volumes, the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, the less enterprising of the Catalan personalities merely changed the forms and compositions of the mediaeval past to a limited degree, loosening their asperities, articulating the bodies somewhat more naturally, idealizing the countenances a bit, exhibiting a dim consciousness of the classical types of Italy, and often substituting for the Gothic settings simulated ancient architecture or its adaptations in the sixteenth century. The outstanding practitioners of the pictorial profession in Catalonia, on the other hand, were partially divorced from the previous tradition of the region, ordinarily reverting to it only for minor ideas in composition, iconography, and the like. One reason was that some of them were foreigners or foreign-trained. Pedro Nunyes not only was an alien, but he joined with others in venturing a break with the Catalan past by adopting somewhat prematurely the style of the Roman Renaissance, retaining with them, however, enough reminiscences of the primitive to warrant inclusion in a volume that, strictly speaking, covers the transition to the later period. Even the native-born artists Jaime Forner and the Balaguer Master illustrate the phenomenon of a considerable severance from the earlier Catalan school through an assumption of classicism. Pedro Cavaro in Sardinia succeeded in fusing better the traits of the High Renaissance with a lingering allegiance to mediaeval precedent. There were in the Catalan domain only two painters of whose visits to Italy we are definitely informed, Manuel Ferrando of Majorca and Pedro Cavaro of Sardinia; but it is hard to find in the world another place than Italy where at the time the exponents of classicism in Catalonia about whom we have no record of an Italian experience could have acquired so thorough an acquaintance with the developed Renaissance, and it is very unlikely that they might have obtained such an education from the still restricted transplantations of the modes to any sections of the Iberian peninsula. No Italians of sufficient eminence to have established the style emigrated to Catalonia. The Neapolitan Nicolás de Credensa, so far as our meagre evidence goes, was merely a lame conservative and a general manager of artistic enterprises rather than a powerful personality in the Barcelona *milieu.* Occasionally the divorce from the older trends of Catalan art was caused by personal idiosyncrasies, as probably in the case of the Canillo Master who precociously indulged in a pronounced aspect of mannerism. It is this partial rupture with the former course of painting that, together with the presence of a number of foreign competitors, differentiated the Catalan school of the early Renaissance from its rivals in the rest of Spain.

Some minor extraneous influences were at work in addition to the effects that the strangers had upon indigenous performers, as of the St. Felix Master upon the Catalan Monogrammist. Diversely from the situation in Andalusia, the Antwerp mannerists as yet played only a very sporadic rôle in the formation of the painters active in Catalonia, but, instead, the prints of Dürer, as Angulo [2] has perceptively shown, were unexpectedly the sources for compositions to a greater extent than elsewhere in Spain, even probably than in contemporary Aragon. Despite the changes from the nature of the Catalan school in the fifteenth century, there was much that remained the same. The themes continued to be religious in Catalonia throughout the first decades of the Cinquecento, which constitute the period treated in this book, and, as almost without exception elsewhere in conservative and pious Spain, there was still no patronage for portraits dissociated from the donors of sacred pictures or for the mythological, historical, and other secular subjects that already constituted so much of the meat of art in Italy. A subsidiary result was that the paintings, as in the past, were executed on wood, the material for retables and other pieces of ecclesiastical furniture, and not yet on cloth, save for rare and special reasons. The noble tradition of mural painting in Catalonia had long since fallen into desuetude, and neither here nor anywhere else in the peninsula had the invasion of Italian frescoists yet begun. The guild of bridle-makers, in which the painters at Barcelona were oddly enrolled, still persisted as a forceful organization, but as early at least as the middle of the fifteenth century the representatives of the pictorial profession had been formed also into an association of continuing vitality under the patronage of St. Luke.

---

[2] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 327.

SECTION 1

FOREIGN AND PRESUMPTIVELY FOREIGN PAINTERS WITH THEIR FOLLOWERS

CHAPTER II

JUAN GASCÓ

1. Biography, Style, and Sources

The transition in painting from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance was chiefly made in Catalonia by an artist who raises problems that will later concern us and prove actually more interesting than the intrinsic quality of his productions themselves. Now generally known as Juan Gascó, he enjoyed at Vich and in the surrounding towns a busy career of extensive ecclesiastical patronage which a scholarly and thorough-going monograph by the elder Gudiol,[1] together with additions in subsequent articles,[2] enables us to follow in great detail. In the earliest mentions of him in the long series of Vich documents,[3] which begin on April 11, 1503, he is denominated in Catalan as Joan Navarro (or, in Latin, Joannes Navarro) and as by this time a citizen of Vich. Furthermore, in a contract of April 5, 1505, for a retable of St. Honoratus and the Virgin in the cathedral of this city, to make us doubly sure that the surname means that he had originated in Navarre, the full name "Joan Navarro" is followed by the redundant supplement, "painter of the kingdom of Navarre." Commencing, however, with his commission of February 3, 1507, to execute a retable for the church of San Juan del Galí (also called San Juan de Riuprimer) in the suburbs of Vich, he is called in the documents Joan Gascó, but that we have to do with the same person is demonstrated by the considerations that in this contract with Galí the words, "of the kingdom of Navarre," ensue immediately upon the appellation, "Joan Gascó," that in the numerous later references to him the same specification or the adjective "navarro" is often used together with the "Gascó," and that in the notices of payment for the decoration of a cupboard in the cathedral of Vich as late as June 11, 1525, in one instance he is styled "Joan Gascó" and in another still by his simple, old title, "Joan Navarro." Although he was residing in the city of Tudela[4] in (Spanish) Navarre prior to his emigration to Catalonia, in designating his parents in his will of March 18, 1529, he vouchsafes the information that his father had been a farmer of the Navarrese town of Tafalla (directly south of Pamplona). The word "Gascó" is, of course, an adjective signifying *Gascon*, and the Catalans of the early sixteenth century might conceivably have loosely described Spanish Navarre as a part of Gascony, so that even the "Gascó" would have only a geographical sense; but the fact that it is followed in the documents by the adjective "navarro" would imply that it had at least become a surname, whether or not because the family had originally emigrated into Spanish Navarre from Gascony in France, and Gudiol suggests that in 1507 he began to call himself more accurately "Gascó" in order to avoid confusion with other Navarrese then residing at Vich. Because he did not easily assimilate the Catalan tongue or through pride in his Navarrese origin, he always continued to use the Castilian language when he himself wrote in the documents. In emigrating to Catalonia, he was only following the precedent set by a number of other artists from western Spain in the fifteenth century.[5]

---

[1] J. Gudiol, *Mestre Joan Gascó, Estudis universitaris catalans,* I (1907), 281–301, 358–381, and II (1908), 13–38: reprinted as a small, separate book, Barcelona, 1908. The references in my following pages are to the separate book.

[2] I will later specify the articles as occasion requires.

[3] Unless it is otherwise stated, all the documents to which I refer in my discussion of Juan Gascó will be found by consulting Gudiol's monograph.

The array of records that Gudiol has collected identify a number of extant paintings as Gascó's creations, hence establishing conclusively his style and enabling us to attribute to him on internal evidence other preserved, undocumented works. Fate has thus been perverse in handing down to us so rich a legacy from Gascó, whereas it has restricted the inheritance from many a greater master to exiguous proportions. The archives include also the memory of many productions by Gascó that have perished, but they contain little else about him of importance to the historian of art. It is not really apposite to our purpose to observe that the wording of the documents may signify that he first lived out of wedlock with the Juana whom he soon married and from whom he begat many children.[6] Three of his off-spring appear to have followed the paternal profession, Francisco, Sebastián, and Pedro, but only the last is for us a definite personality, whom it will be our duty to study on subsequent pages. Juan Gascó's decoration of some escutcheons for use in the memorial service at Vich in 1504 in honor of the recently deceased Queen Isabella[7] merely connects him with the history of his period. He himself died sometime between his will of March 18, 1529, and November 8 of this year when his widow and daughters took steps to acquire their bequests.

---

[4] By an unpardonable oversight I have not come across a publication of the document stating his residence in Tudela, but writing as early as 1911 the trustworthy Gudiol (*Pàgina artística*, No. 103, of the Barcelona newspaper, *La Veu de Catalunya* of December 10, 1911) calls him a son of this Navarrese city, an affiliation that appears in all modern accounts of the painter.

[5] See my vol. VII, p. 45.

[6] We have seen in vol. XI, p. 11, that the word "natural" did not necessarily at this time mean *illegitimate*, so that it is not certain that Gudiol is right in believing that, of Gascó's two sons named Francisco, the one in his will labelled with this

From Gudiol's long list of contracts and other allusions to his retables and minor works in the documents, I will refer in this chapter only to those surely or possibly mentioning extant works, leaving the curious reader to peruse the others, if he so desires, in the Catalan scholar's monograph. Since the issuance of his book a few further data have come to light. Most important of these is the documentation of a work that, as we shall find, occupies a very significant position in the master's development, the retable on the high altar of the parish church at the town of San Pedro de Vilamajor, just north of Granollers. Burned in the cataclysm of 1936, it existed to a late enough date to be excellently photographed by the Archivo de Arqueología Catalana, and I myself had the good fortune to study it *in situ* just two days before the disturbances in Catalonia broke out. The long contract of Gascó, dated February 2, 1513, and his receipts for payment on December 18, 1514, and February 4, 1516, were published by Ferran de Segarra in 1911.[8] The commission included also the polychromy of the vault of the apse and of the arch of entrance to it, above the retable, but this decoration perished when at the beginning of the seventeenth century the old church was torn down and a new one substituted but when happily the whole retable was preserved and merely transferred, with a few changes in the arrangement of its parts, to the more modern edifice. On reading the documents, Gudiol[9] wrote an article about the retable in which he analyzed the original construction of its components. In this article

---

adjective was a bastard, despite the fact that he is separated in the document from the rest of the children. Directly underneath in the will, indeed, the adjective "natural" probably should be interpreted as merely and actually emphasizing legitimacy in the terms applied to his daughters, "legitimis et naturalibus."

[7] See the appendix to Gudiol's monograph.

[8] In the *Pàgina artística*, No. 95, of the Barcelona newspaper, *La Veu de Catalunya,* of October 12, 1911.

[9] In the *Pàgina artística*, No. 103, of *La Veu de Catalunya* of December 10, 1911.

also he accepted as later achievements of Gascó two panels hailing from another altar in the church of San Pedro de Vilamajor and now in the Diocesan Museum at Barcelona.

Moreover, in a further article of the year 1912,[10] he published Gascó's contract of January 5, 1522, for a retable of the two St. Johns, St. Michael, and St. Furtianus in the church of the town of San Félix de Torelló (north of Vich) which he had only summarized in his monograph. The retable is not preserved, but his employment at San Félix, and also earlier in 1509, according to a contract that Gudiol does include in his book, for a likewise lost altarpiece at the adjacent village of San Pedro de Torelló demonstrates his popularity in the district, and thus adds its witness to the stylistic evidence to prove that Gascó did the extant, undocumented retable from another not distant hamlet, San Vicente de Torelló, now in the Vich Museum. The actual source of the retable is not the parish church of San Vicente de Torelló but the near-lying *ermita* of San Vicente de Borgoña. J. M. Madurell's publication [11] of Gascó's receipt of January 3, 1526, for remuneration for two lost retables that he had done in the church of the monastery of San Miguel del Fay, south of Vich (near San Félix de Codinas), possesses the importance of showing that his reputation had spread to Barcelona, since the orders came from no less a personage than the director of the Royal Treasury in Catalonia, a Jaime Ferrer; but, since the monastery lies in the general region of Gascó's other activity, we have yet to discover any notice of his employment in the capital Barcelona itself. Furthermore, the archivist of the cathedral of La Seo de Urgel, Don Pedro Pujol, has divulged [12] the record of payment to Gascó at the end of October, 1528, for the expenses of a journey to this city on an unspecified mission, but it is impossible to accept Pujol's suggestion that this painter might be the author of the retable once in the Iglesia de la Piedad at La Seo de Urgel but now belonging to the Conde de Egara at Tarrasa, since he was dead by the time that, not before 1530, it was executed and since, as we shall see,[13] it has recently been recognized as an achievement of Pedro Nunyes.

The chief problem in which Gascó involves us is the pronounced change in his manner that took place at least as early as 1521, the date of his retable for the town of Prúit, from which the Vich Museum possesses the only extant relic, a Crucifixion. He started out as a mediaeval painter, exhibiting no higher than indifferent talents, but he eventually adopted a style not only impregnated with traits of the Italian Renaissance, in particular apparently as embodied in Umbria, but so diverse in its types of humanity and indeed in its general character from the modes of his beginnings at Vich that one could scarcely believe the productions of this second period to be the creations of the man responsible for the works of the first decade of the century, unless both series were soundly assigned to Juan Gascó by the documents. Moreover, he emerges in the second group as having decidedly improved his technical capacity and as at least a tolerable exponent of his art. We cannot resort to the explanation that he turned over the execution of these later works to his son Pedro, who, to be sure, passed entirely into the fashions of the Renaissance but whose paintings exhibit types of persons unlike those of Juan. As a matter of fact, the retable of 1513 for San Pedro de Vilamajor fortunately shows the alteration taking place in Juan himself, fusing, as it does, reminiscences of his early manner and prophecies of his mature attainments. Furthermore, the types of his beginnings occasionally crop forth in his mature creations, and, *vice versa*, there are a few timid prognostications of the Renaissance during his first years at Vich. The easiest theory would be that he made a journey to Italy, lingering in Umbria and possibly Siena, inasmuch as his productions are very like inferior manifestations of the achievements of Pintoricchio's Sienese disciple, Matteo Balducci. Although we can follow his career at Vich in the documents year by year, yet there are intervals of months that he could have spent in the not too distant, sister peninsula, and, despite his meagre artistic gifts, his ability to metamorphose his manner reveals that he was a person at least of sufficient mental alertness to have stimulated him to seek inspiration in the country that was then the fountain-head of European aesthetic proclivities. The sight of the Italian masterpieces of the Renaissance and perhaps the privilege of short study in the shop of some Italian artist would probably account for the rise in the level of his ability.

---

[10] *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Vich,* I (1912), 46–48; republished by Fortiá Solá, *Historia de Torelló,* Barcelona, II, 1948, pp. 42–43.

[11] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* II, 1 (1944), 65.

[12] *Analecta sacra tarraconensia,* I (1925), 337, n.16.

[13] P. 201.

We can, however, by no means scout the possibility that the transmutation of his style and attainments took place at home and was occasioned merely by the influence of his superior rivals whose activity lay in the contiguous province of Gerona and who adopted wholeheartedly and more successfully mastered the lessons of the Italian Renaissance, the painters whom I shall call the St. Felix Master and the Catalan Monogrammist. The types of Gascó's maturity are to a certain extent like feebler dilutions of the Monogrammist's models, and, although they are more similar to those of Pintoricchio and even the young Raphael than are the men and women whom we meet in the Monogrammist's output, it is conceivable that they embody an autonomous modification by Gascó of his rival's forms, independently resulting in the analogies to the Umbrian school. He might even have absorbed what he knew of the Italian Renaissance at Valencia, where the new movement was early engrafted, especially as it expressed itself in Ferrarese and Bolognese terms, which are perhaps sufficiently analogous to those of Umbria to have constituted the basis of Gascó's later manner. If he was familiar with Valencian production, he acquired much less from Paolo da San Leocadio than from such painters as the St. Narcissus Master and the Artés Master, to the second of whom he often approaches with rather amazing closeness.

Another problem is the question whether the source of his first style was the manner that Pedro Diáz had established in Navarre at the end of the fifteenth century or the very similar modes of Pablo Vergós in Catalonia. Certainly he owed little or nothing to the serene aspect of painting that Huguet had made the norm for the greater part of the Catalan school at the end of the Middle Ages, but the quite fortuitous correspondence of the harsher Pablo Vergós to Pedro Díaz and his Navarrese followers that I stressed in volume VII [14] is so marked that we cannot lightly set aside the hypothesis that Gascó was supplied by Pablo with the Vich painter's earliest style of which we are cognizant. On the whole, nevertheless, the balance weighs in favor of the theory that he came to Vich with his pictorial manner already fixed and derived from the fashions which he had learned in his native province in the *entourage* of Pedro Díaz. The figures of Gascó, for instance, are likely to be hidden in the cascades of Hispano-Flemish drapery that Pedro Díaz affected to an even greater extent than Pablo Vergós, although from the first in Gascó a breath of the Renaissance has slightly smoothed out Pedro's excessive and schematized puckering of the folds. The work in Navarre that most nearly approximates Gascó's manner is the retable of the Crucifix, apparently influenced by Díaz, in the cathedral of Pamplona; [15] but it was probably executed after his removal to Catalonia, and neither in this nor in any other Navarrese paintings does it seem possible to detect his hand.[16]

---

[14] P. 430.

The embossing of the gold in his early productions has no bearing upon the origins of the essentials of his style, for Pedro Díaz, like the Catalans, was accustomed thus to render the haloes and such appurtenances as the borders of garments; and the embossing, in which Díaz does not indulge, of the ostentatious patterns in the gold backgrounds was merely demanded of Gascó by his patrons in accordance with the long established and peculiar Catalan practice. Indeed, probably because the chaster taste of the Renaissance was suppressing the mediaeval predilection for this auric splendor even in Catalonia where it had been so deeply embedded, he soon abandoned the raised and gilded stucco embellishments and was content, as sometimes were the earlier Catalan masters themselves, with the tooling of the flat gold surfaces that we encounter, as a matter of fact, in the general Hispano-Flemish production of western Spain in which the Navarrese school was included. The only instances where the embossings intrude into the subordinate compartments are found in his earliest extant retable, made before 1503 for the church of San Juan de Fábregas, and in the Prophets alone in the retable of San Pedro de Vilamajor, where, at the later date of 1513, the usage reappears merely because Gascó was required to imitate the Prophets by Pablo Vergós [17] at Granollers. The last dated monument in which the embossings occur in the background and details of the principal compartment is the retable of 1507 at San Juan del Galí.

2. Documented Works

In the case of the earliest production by Juan Gascó from which pieces are preserved, a retable for the church of the town of San Juan de Fábregas (northeast of Vich), we do not possess the contract, but the panels, now in the Vich Museum, are authenticated by the fact that in the agreement with him of April 11, 1503, to do a

---

[15] Vol. IX, p. 722.

[16] After writing this paragraph, I find that José Gudiol Ricart (*Pintura gótica*, Madrid, 1955, p. 384, vol. IX in the series *Ars Hispaniae*) also sees in Gascó the influence of Pedro Díaz and even the former's collaboration in his retable of the high altar in the cathedral of Tudela.

[17] See below, p. 26.

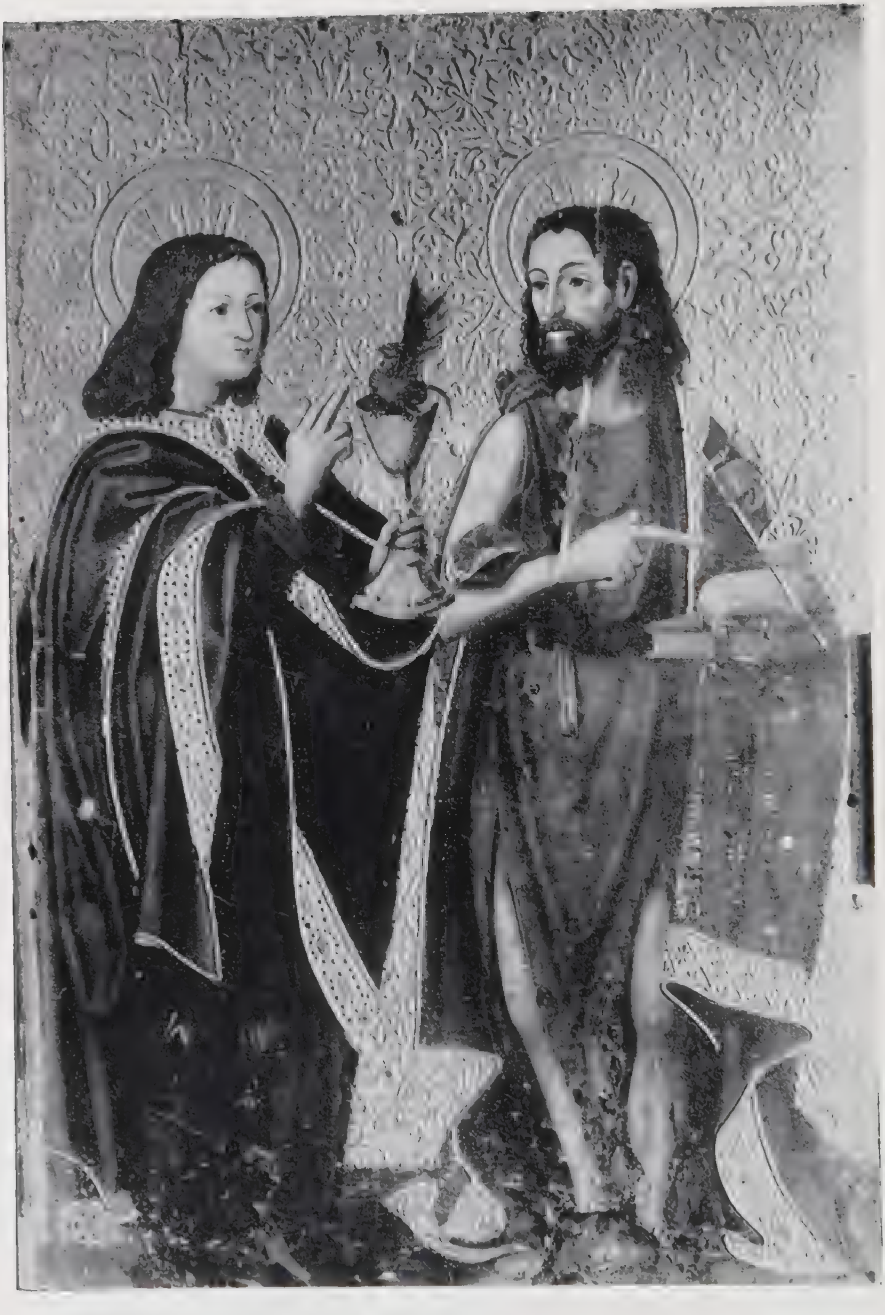

Fig. 1. JUAN GASCÓ. THE TWO ST. JOHNS, CENTRE OF RETABLE. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Thomas*)

(lost) retable at Vilanova de Sau (east of Vich) it is ordered that the gold shall be treated in the same way as in the altarpiece at San Juan de Fábregas which he is specifically stated already to have painted. We can thus place him at Vich and date the panels at least as early as the year previous, 1502. They comprise: the principal compartment, displaying effigies of the two St. Johns standing against a rather freely meandering foliate pattern of raised gold such as we often encounter in Catalan pictures of the fifteenth century instead of the formalized designs from brocades (Fig. 1); and two of the lateral, narrative divisions, representing the Precursor's Baptism of Christ and St. John Evangelist composing the Apocalypse on Patmos, both scenes set in mildly pleasing landscapes. The style still belongs wholly within the precincts of the Hispano-Flemish modes of the late fifteenth century, manipulated by a not too competent craftsman, with the St. John on Patmos and the angel mentioned in the first verse of the Book of Revelation patently embodying even at this late moment the Flemish ingredient in this composite phase in the evolution of the Spanish school. The roughness of the type employed for the Baptist might stem either from Pedro Díaz or Pablo Vergós, but the former alternative is implied by the superabundance of angular draperies in which Gascó envelops his personages.

His next documented work of 1507, the retable of the Baptist in the *capilla mayor* of the church of San Juan del Galí,[18] betrays that in the interval of five years he has not altered his style and that, if anything, he has lowered its quality. One or two slight factors might conceivably be interpreted as betokening some dim realization of the Renaissance, but in any case the new movement has as yet meant nothing to him. Almost all the compartments are preserved, conforming exactly in theme, with one slight exception, to the terms of the contract and now built into a structure of the end of the eighteenth century over the high altar. First there is the central panel of the seated Baptist against the embossed gold background that is explicitly required in the agreement, here thrown into an even less formal design of branches and leaves than in the retable for San Juan de Fábregas; then, at the sides, six small scenes from his life which are of such general occurrence that it is not necessary to specify them; the Crucifixion in its customary capping location; and two sections of the predella with half-lengths of paired saints, at the left Barbara and Catherine (whereas the contract had asked for the Magdalene and Eulalia) and at the right Sebastian and Santiago. In the subordinate sections in the main body of the retable and in the predella unembossed gold backgrounds are employed, sometimes again free in their patterns and in other instances derived from the flamboyant, stereotyped character of brocades, but in the Crucifixion the gold has been hidden by repaint. The additional pieces mentioned in the contract have disappeared, the Pietà at the middle of the predella, the doors with effigies of Sts. Peter and Paul, and the *guardapolvos* adorned with heraldry and other purely decorative details.

---

[18] See above, p. 11.

It is chiefly in the Crucifixion that we discover elements that we might wrest into prophecies of Gascó's later manner. The Magdalene has something of the smoother, slimmer, and more ideal beauty of the Renaissance, already very like the corresponding figure in the Crucifixion of 1521 from Prúit, but, as in many another instance in the ultimate stages of Hispano-Flemish art, the change may be the result of a natural relaxation of the pristine harshness of the style quite apart from any Italian influence. More suggestive is the establishment, in Perugino's and the young Raphael's mode, of a middle ground, containing small figures of human beings and animals, between the tragedy on Calvary at the front and the city of Jerusalem in the distance. The composition for the Baptism is scarcely varied from the rendering that Gascó did for San Juan de Fábregas, but in the rather vigorously delineated Pharisee in the foreground of the audience of three in the compartment of the Precursor's sermon (Fig. 2) there is some augury of the respectable capacities that the painter was eventually to develop.

A document of March 12, 1508, reiterates the terms of a lost contract of the month of April, 1507, that had been drawn up with Gascó for a retable in the church of San Julián de Vilamirosa, the arrangements for which had been interrupted by an outbreak of the plague. Once a parish church, San Julián de Vilamirosa has degenerated into the status of an *ermita,* near Manlleu, north of Vich, but all the parts of the retable except the *guardapolvos* have survived and are now divided at Vich between the Museum and the Abadal Collection. In the principal panel (Abadal) St. Julian is depicted, according to the demands of the document and according to the general mediaeval Spanish iconography of the theme, as an aristocratic young huntsman carrying his falcon, but Gascó has given his patrons

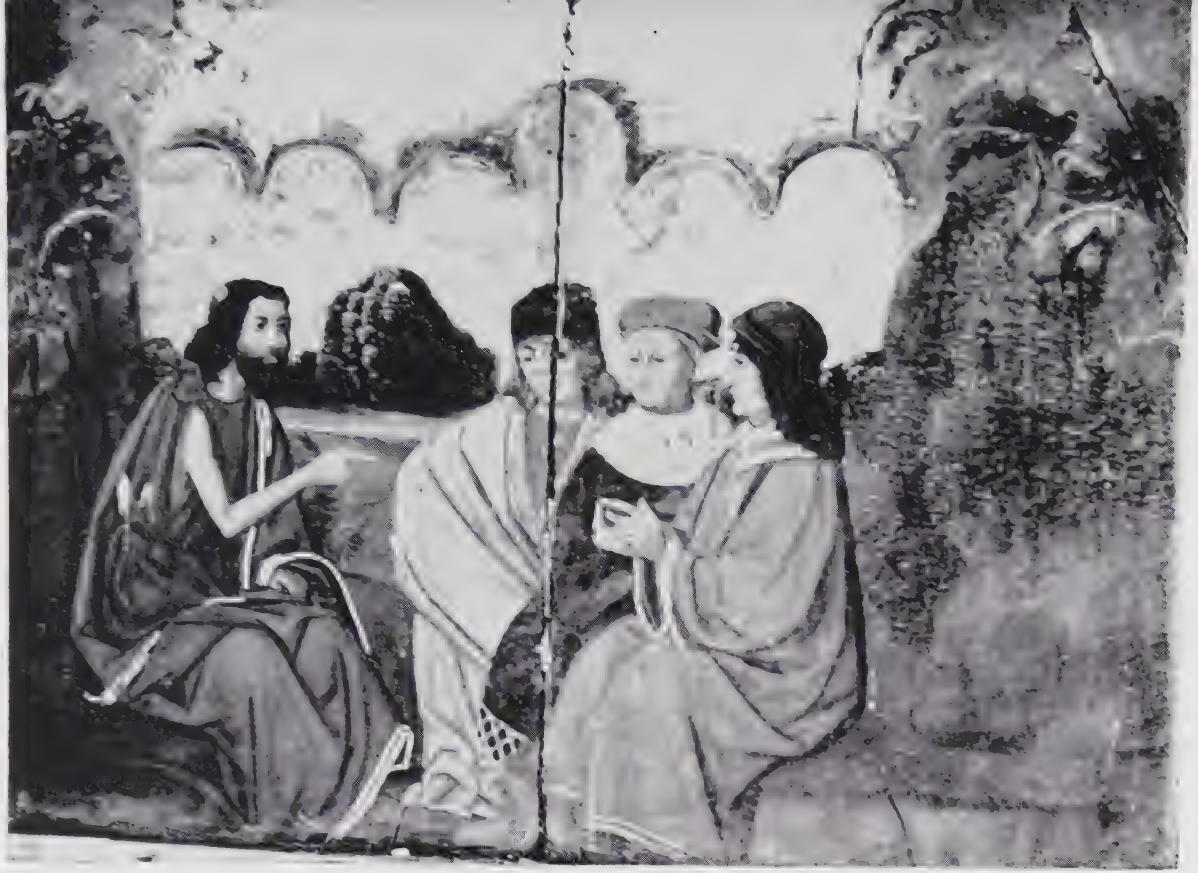

Fig. 2. JUAN GASCO. ST. JOHN BAPTIST PREACHING TO THE PHARISEES, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, SAN JUAN DEL GALÍ
(*Photo. Mas*)

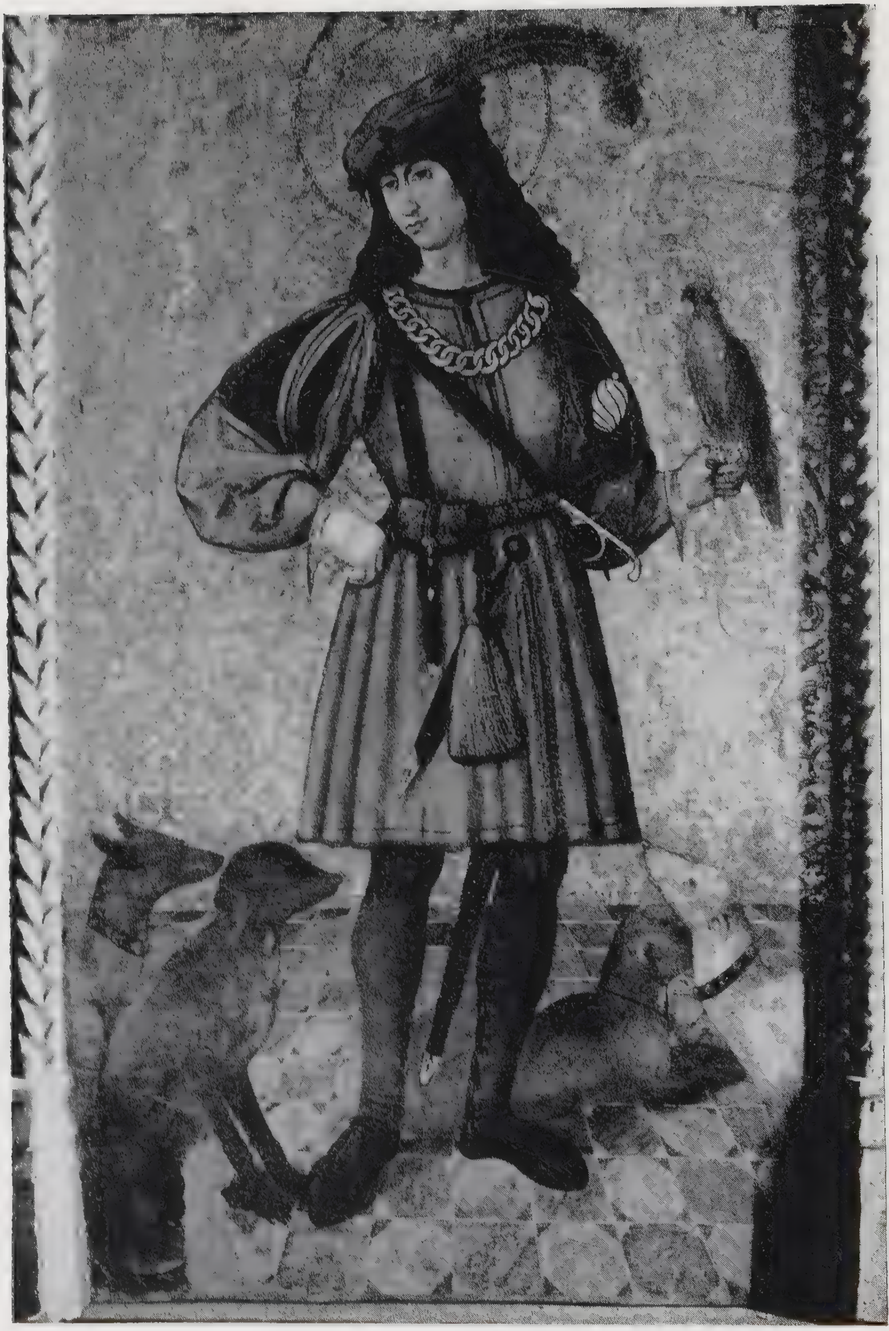

Fig. 3. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. JULIAN, CENTRE OF RETABLE. ABADAL COLLECTION, VICH

(*Photo. Mas*)

good measure by adding four hounds of the chase, which, however, betray that Providence had not meant him to be a painter of animals (Fig. 3). The Crucifixion (Abadal) curiously lacks the figure of the Magdalene that the contract definitely stipulates, the actors being confined to the suffering Saviour, the Virgin, and St. John. In the lateral compartments, the specified St. Michael and Santiago (both in the Museum) occupy the lower zone. The document states that the commissioners will decide whether the corresponding spaces in the upper zone shall contain effigies of saints or episodes from St. Julian's life, but the former alternative prevailed, causing Gascó to paint the seated Roch and Sebastian (both in the Abadal Collection). The themes of the predella (Museum) are also left to the arbitrament of the donors, and they turn out to be in the middle the Christ of the Mass of St. Gregory between two angels and at the sides half-lengths of Sts. Peter, John Baptist, Stephen, and Paul, designated by underlying inscriptions in Catalan, Stephen's name followed by the initials P and M of Protomartyr. It is also nominated in the bond that the authorities will determine whether the gold backgrounds in the predella (and so, by implication, in the whole retable) shall be embossed or not, and the extant panels reveal that the decision was for flat surfaces, tooled with various brocaded patterns. The style still lies within the Gothic tradition, showing little or no amelioration of the artist's craft, and the only really new element is the sincerity with which in the Crucifixion the grief of the Virgin and St. John is felt.

From a retable for the parish church of San Román de Sau (just east of Vich) that on April 28, 1509, Juan Gascó agreed to execute, there remains only the central panel of St. Romanus (somewhat cut at the left side) in the Orriols Collection at Vich, a dull performance adding to neither our knowledge nor appreciation of the artist (Fig. 4). The gold both of the halo and of the brocaded design in the background is unembossed. The emblem of St. Romanus [19] is here the rack (*eculeus*) upon which, among his various tortures, his body was carded.

We come next to a pivotal creation of Gascó, the retable of 1513–1516 preserved until 1936 over the high altar of the parochial church at San Pedro de Vilamajor, which, as a transitional work, very materially helps to bridge the sharp gap between his two manners. The statue of St. Peter with its Gothic canopy, the polychromy of both

---

[19] Vol. VII, p. 586.

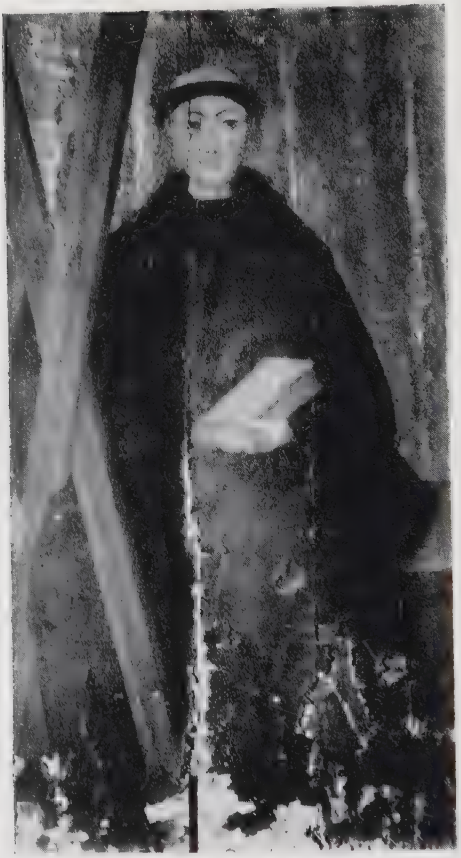

FIG. 4. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. ROMANUS.
ORRIOLS COLLECTION, VICH
(*Photo. Mas*)

of which he was ordered to do in the contract for the retable,[20] was moved higher up in its position at the centre of the structure when in the seventeenth century the retable was transferred to the new church, the purpose being to give place below to the elaborate baroque tabernacle of the year 1660. Until the retable's destruction in our day, the paintings consisted, first, of four large flanking scenes from St. Peter's life the subjects of which are left in the contract to the authorities of the town, who eventually chose his calling by Christ, together with St. Andrew, his resurrection, in company with St. Paul,

---

[20] See above, p. 13.

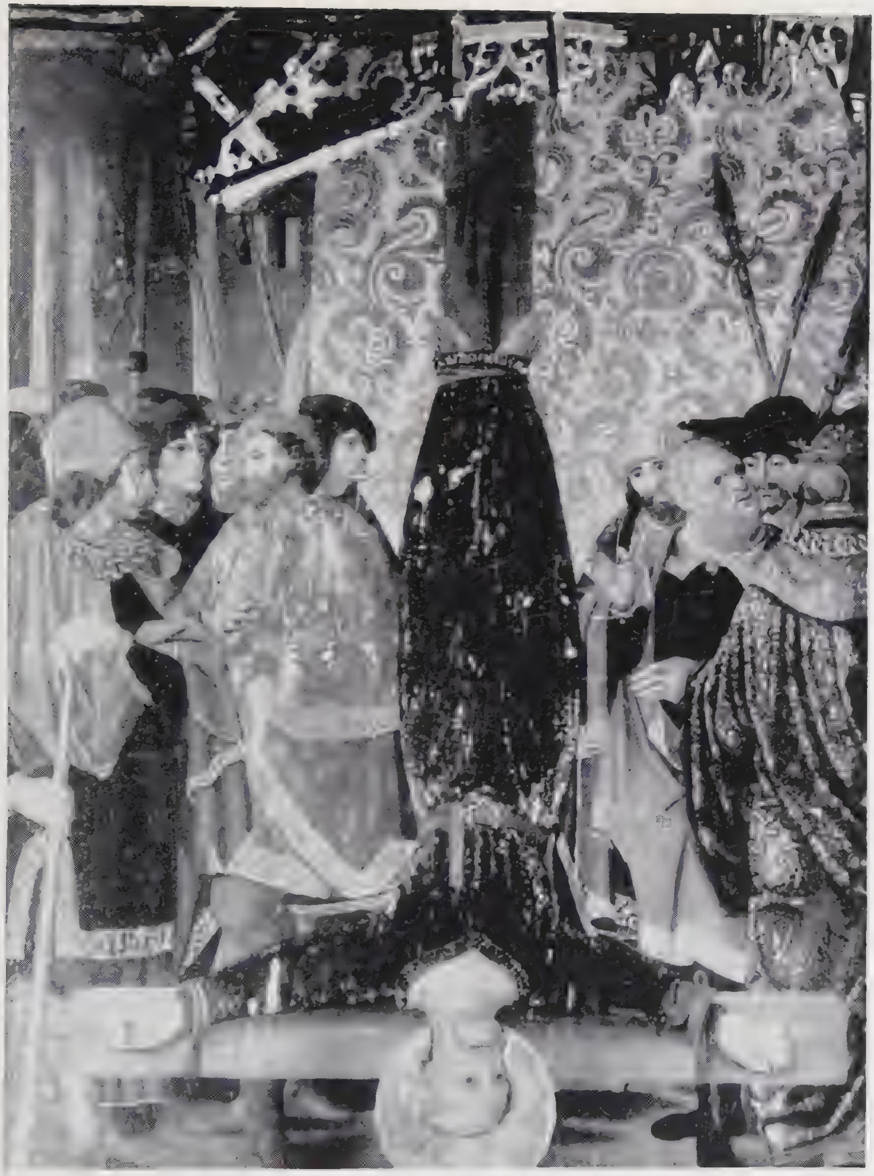

FIG. 5. JUAN GASCÓ. CRUCIFIXION OF ST PETER, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, SAN PEDRO DE VILAMAJOR

(*Photo. Mas*)

of the youth upon whom the incantations of Simon Magus had failed,[21] the "Quo vadis" episode, and the Apostle's crucifixion (Fig. 5). On the tabernacle, Gascó depicted Christ of the Passion in the central face and the mourning Virgin and St. John in the lateral pieces, but the Christ was eventually inserted in the uppermost level of the baroque tabernacle and the two other figures on the tabernacle's back. The scenes of the Flagellation and Via Dolorosa demanded in the contract to flank the original tabernacle in the predella were at the time of the reconstruction set at either side of the middle level of the later tabernacle, but, since thus two spaces were left below in the new arrangement, they were filled with a pair of panels, embodying the legend of St. Michael, which have now been discovered to be by a painter, Francisco Mestre, and must derive from some other retable once in the church.[22] The *guardapolvos*, with the four Prophets Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah, were transferred, by the reorganization, into parts of the retable's main body, at the outer sides of the narrative scenes. The contract explicitly required that they should be imitated from the Prophets in the retable at Granollers,[23] whom I believe to have been executed by Pablo Vergós, and as a matter of fact Gascó painted the same four worthies of the Old Testament, reproducing their style to a certain extent and even repeating the inscriptions on the accompanying banderoles except in the case of David, for whom there was selected at San Pedro de Vilamajor verse six of the seventy-second Psalm, "Orietur in diebus eius justitia, etc." The orthodox themes for the doors of a retable were Sts. Peter and Paul; but, since the former was already honored in the structure, the contract substitutes Santiago, and by one of the frequent changes in an iconographical program he was eventually ousted by St. Bartholomew.[24] In the reconstruction, beyond the doors were two pilasters, the only sections not itemized in the contract, painted with figures of the four Fathers of the Church smaller in size than the Prophets above. Gudiol believed that the pilasters were parts of the *guardapolvos,* but it is more probable that they constituted only further ornaments of the doors like the four Evangelists in Gascó's retable in the Hospital de S. Bartolomé at Vich.[25] The two doors and pilasters were elevated in the seventeenth century from their pristine spots beside the altar into the body of the retable, framing the predella. The embossing of the brocaded patterns in the gold behind the Prophets was occasioned by the obligation laid upon Gascó of copying the figures by Pablo Vergós, for in the gilded backgrounds in the other compartments the several formalized and flamboyant designs are not emphasized by raised stucco.

---

[21] Wrongly denominated by Gudiol as the raising of Tabitha.

[22] See my vol. VII, p. 51. Ainaud has included in his unprinted article (cf. above, p. 4) what he had already kindly revealed to me in conversation, namely that an unpublished note of the elder Gudiol shows the archives of the church to disclose Mestre as the author of the panels of the archangel. I have yet to recognize any other works by his hand, and none of his documented achievements seems now to be preserved; but we possess rather copious notes of his activity stretching from September 11, 1476, to his death about 1500. See: Sanpere y Miquel, *Los cuatrocentistas*, II, 202; José Mas, in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras*, Barcelona, VI (1911–1912), 256, 435, and 440; and J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 1 (1944), 37–38, and II, 2 (1944), 66–67. The elder Gudiol states that behind the tabernacle in San Pedro de Vilamajor there was a third panel which did not belong to Gascó's assemblage but the subject of which he does not specify. This I failed to see at my visit to the church.

[23] Vol. VII, p. 425. The younger Gudiol (*Guías artísticas de España, Barcelona*, Barcelona, 1946, p. 181, and in a letter to me) attributes the actual Prophets in the Granollers retable to Gascó, but I cannot agree. In their more primitive but at the same time much more virile and distinguished character, they seem to me worlds apart from the specimens in the altarpiece of San Pedro de Vilamajor and are often duplicated by the facial types in other works by Pablo Vergós. It is one of several contemporary or nearly contemporary Spanish instances of an artist being asked to base himself upon the achievement of another. I still hold by my rejection (vol. X, p. 354) of Angulo's ascription to Gascó of the veronica of Christ in the Museum of Vich that has been generally assigned to Bermejo, whose similar head on the reverse of the Epiphany of Granada (vol. V, p. 186) strengthens his claims to the Vich example. The Granada picture has been fully revealed by cleaning and is illustrated as plate XV in the book by F. J. Sánchez Cantón, *Libros, tapices y cuadros que coleccionó Isabel la Católica*, Madrid, 1950.

In the scenes of the calling and the "Quo vadis" Gascó pretty largely abided by his old, Gothic habits, indeed betraying more sadly than in any of his former works his incompetence in the articulation of movement; and the Christ of the predella also contributed nothing new to his hitherto limited attainments. The small forms of the Roman soldiers searching for the escaped St. Peter in the distance of the "Quo vadis" episode, however, were somewhat accommodated to Umbrian or Ferrarese-Bolognese precedents, and the Flagellation and Via Dolorosa, although the treatment of the Saviour was still retrogressive, included many participants in large scale practically identical with the types that we shall find in his fully evolved second manner. Not only all of the figures at the left in the Flagellation belonged to this forward-looking class, but also in the Via Dolorosa the bravo above Our Lord in particular and the boy with the lance at the right, one of the dapper youths who are so frequent in the master's later output (as at the head of the group beside St. Vincent's bedside in the retable from San Vicente de Torelló) and whom it is difficult to explain save through contact with the art of Pintoricchio and Raphael. In the compartment representing St. Peter's miracle of resurrection, Nero's empress had the countenance that we shall see in the St. Sigismund among the fragments of a later retable in private possession at Vich; the St. Paul was a kind of long-bearded old man often emerging in Gascó's subsequent productions; and the fleshy countenance of the personage just behind St. Peter (Simon Magus?) was afterward much used by the painter, as in the attendant upon the king in the panel from the Hospital de S. Bartolomé at Vich, in a praiseworthy endeavor to individualize his actors sharply. The same almost monstrously obese specimen of humanity was forced into service for two of the spectators at the right in St. Peter's martyrdom, where the style of the Renaissance very perceptibly affected all the men at the left, especially the foremost wearing a jauntily slanting cap, who was to be virtually repeated in the second prominent young witness of St. Vincent's death in the Torelló altarpiece. Gudiol has noted at the right in the background of the "Quo vadis" episode an attempt to give the Roman *milieu* by a suggestion of the Castel Sant' Angelo, which, however, since it may be derived from a print or someone else's description, cannot be taken as an argument for the possibility that Gascó had been in Italy. The encasement of the Prophets in auric splendor was imposed on Gascó by the injunction to have in mind the Vergós prototypes, and he even amplified the volume of Abraham's and David's garments, perhaps because of his Castilian training; but their faces, the only parts that the schematized magnificence left free to his efforts, assumed almost the character of the high Roman Renaissance, and this tendency, carrying with it even something of the dryness of the painting of the later Cinquecento, was even more apparent in the four Fathers, who should be compared with the St. Martial among the figures from another retable that he did subsequently for San Pedro de Vilamajor.[26] With the changes in manner there was already involved a slight realization of higher technical ambitions. As we have seen, Gascó possessed a partial alertness of mind superior to his actual artistic endowment, stimulating him in this instance to give expression to his originality by violating the prescription of the contract so far as to vary slightly Pablo Vergós's conceptions of Abraham and Isaiah and very considerably the treatment of Moses and David.

---

[24] The elder Gudiol failed to perceive that St. Bartholomew took the place of Santiago, but the former Apostle is plainly identified not only by the attributes of the knife and demon but even by the inscription in his halo.

[25] See below, p. 35.

---

[26] See below, p. 43.

The panel in the Vich Museum of St. Barbara standing before a throne, the principal compartment of an otherwise lost retable for which in the church of the Piedad in this city Gascó contracted on November 25, 1516, is so bound by the long tradition of such paintings at the centre of Spanish altarpieces that it gives us little opportunity to judge how much further by this time he had progressed along the ways of the Renaissance (Fig. 6). His draughtsmanship, however, has improved; he has acquired some ability to pose a figure easily and gracefully; the architecture of the throne, including a tympanum adorned with the shell *motif*, is very definitely Italianate; and the nature of the martyr's face and its delicacy seem plainly to witness to an admiration for Pintoricchio's style. Brocaded gold again constitutes the background, and the emblem of the tower is set at one side, in exactly the spot where the contract requires. The inscription of St. Barbara's name in Roman letters in the lower left corner of the panel is probably a much later addition.

Another sole relic of an authenticated altarpiece, the Crucifixion in the Vich Museum from a retable in the church of S. Andrés at Prúit (northeast of Vich), for which the contract is dated April 6, 1521, turns out to be more instructive, though less attractive, than the St. Barbara (Fig. 7). Were it not for the document and for the partial predictions in his earlier undertakings, one would hardly recognize the painter of San Juan de Fábregas and San Juan del Galí in these slim and elegant forms in which his old asperity has been mitigated by Italianism. The Virgin is one among many of the types in his later productions arrestingly similar to the persons depicted by the Artés Master at Valencia. He maintained until the end his golden skies, here tooled with one of his favorite patterns, a repeated rosette. The great vogue of Dürer's prints as models for the Catalan artists of the period that Angulo[27] has demonstrated is strikingly illustrated by the fact that even so provincial a painter as Gascó was familiar enough with them to use as prototypes for the Virgin and

---

[27] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 327–330; and for the many examples noted in the present volume, see the entry Dürer in the index of names.

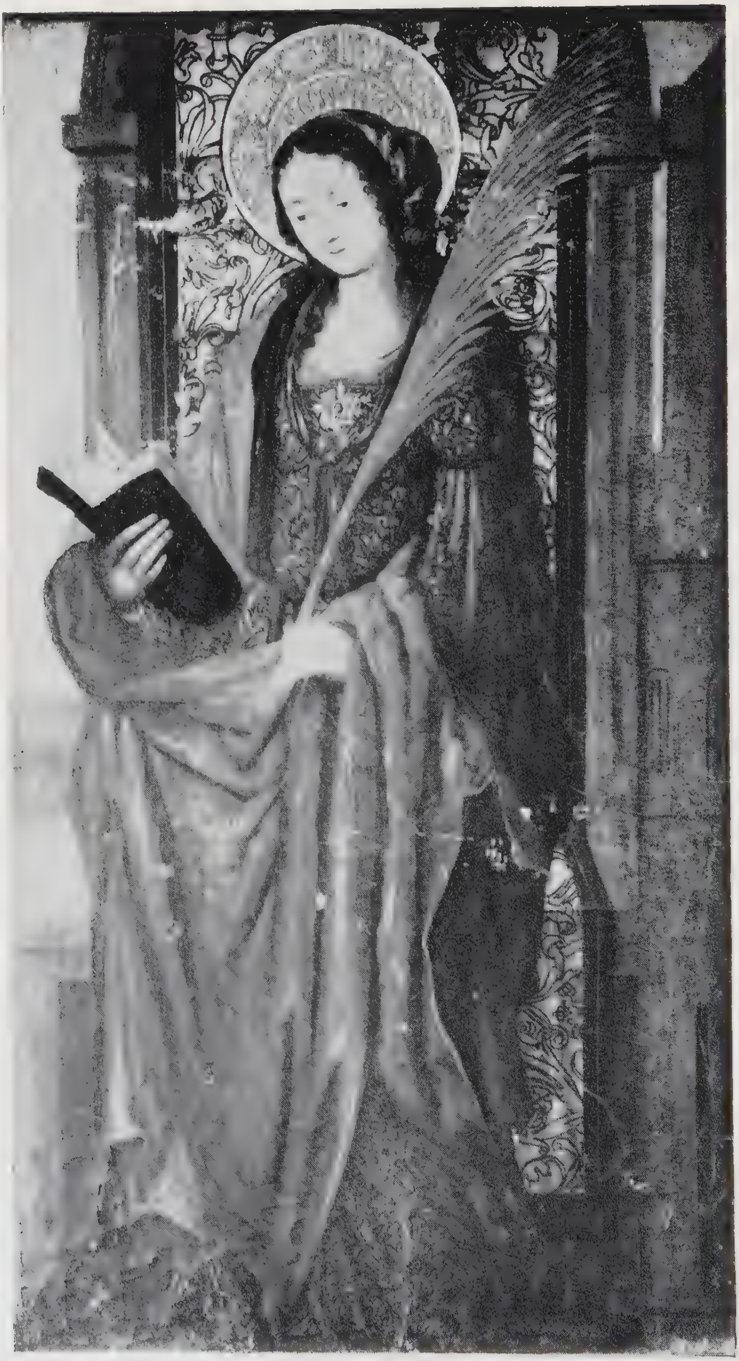

FIG. 6. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. BARBARA. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

St. John in this Crucifixion the corresponding figures in the engraving of the theme comprised in the series of the Little Passion.

On June 11, 1525, and again on the same or an immediately succeeding day he was remunerated for painting the door of a cupboard which in the cathedral of Vich contained silver vessels and other precious objects of cult. From this commission the Vich Museum possesses a panel that constituted the whole or perhaps one valve of the door, divided into eight small, rectangular compartments, two in each of the four tiers, decorated with busts of Prophets and Sibyls enveloped by inscribed scrolls and executed in grisaille against alternating red and blue backgrounds. The six upper figures are Prophets; but the pair in the top row are preserved only in part, and their inscriptions so far destroyed as to be unidentifiable and to forestall the personages' recognition. Of the four succeeding Prophets, Amos and Jonah display scrolls merely with pious sentiments from their writings,[28] but the verses from Joel and Habakkuk bear upon the use of the chest to contain the church's treasure.[29] The two lowest compartments are reserved for Sibyls,[30] in whom I can see no reason for discerning, with Gudiol, the Cumaean and Erythraean. The sources of the inscriptions encircling them are found, as generally in the iconography of the period,[31] among the many Christian predictions ascribed to the various Sibyls by the Latin writer of the early Church, Lactantius. Both of those chosen for Gascó's panel come from the end of the eighteenth chapter of the seventh book of the *Divinae institutiones* of Lactantius and look forward to the advent of Christ: "A summo sole egressio eius" (evidently an adaptation of the Greek that Lactantius puts in the mouth of one of his Sibyls, more usually done into Latin as "Tunc ex sole Deus mittet regem"); and (now conforming to the regular Latin translation), "Grave servitutis iugum tollet et impias leges (solvet)." [32]

The door incorporates a fairly capable style of the Renaissance quite surprisingly analogous to that of Pintoricchio and Balducci. The foppish youth into whom Amos is strangely transformed seems

---

[28] In the case of Amos, V, 4–5, and of Jonah, II, 3.

[29] Joel, III, 5, and Habakkuk, II, 6.

[30] For further examples of the Sibyls, not often included in Spanish iconography, see vol. XI, p. 292.

[31] E. Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du moyen âge en France*, edition of 1908, pp. 270 ff.

[32] The *solvet* does not appear in the scroll.

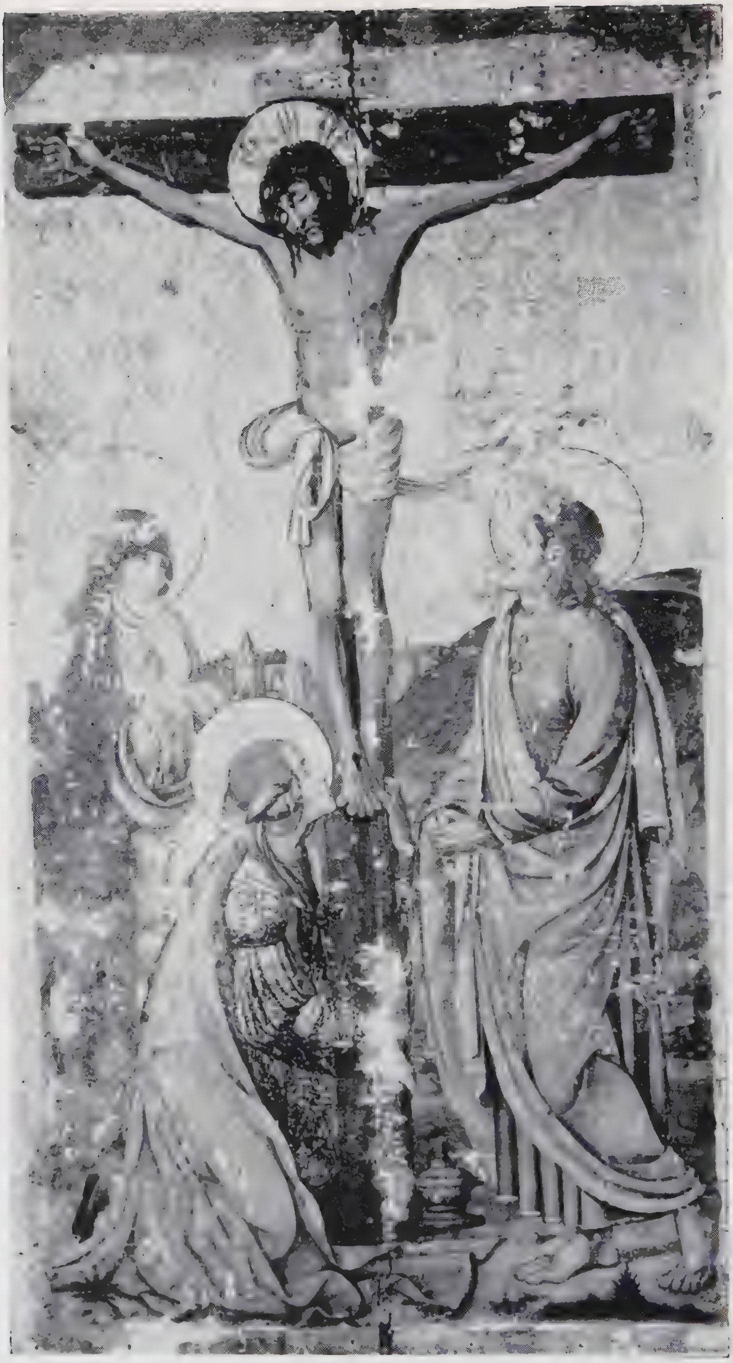

Fig. 7. JUAN GASCÓ. CRUCIFIXION FROM SAN ANDRÉS DE PRÚIT. MUSEUM, VICH

(*Photo. Serra*)

vividly reminiscent of the so-called portrait of the adolescent Raphael in Pintoricchio's fresco of the canonization of St. Catherine in the Library of the Siena cathedral, and the Sibyl with the inscription about the sun (Fig. 8) scarcely differs from the Italian master's pretty but entirely inadequate conceptions of these prophetesses at Spello and in the choir of S. Maria del Popolo at Rome. Jonah is another specimen of Gascó's heavily jowled old men.

His last, extant, documented work is once more a single panel, now in the Torelló Collection, Barcelona, depicting St. Bartholomew exorcising the idol and shattering it in the presence of King Polemius (Fig. 9), the only piece remaining to us from a retable in the destroyed church of the Hospital de Peregrinos de S. Bartolomé at

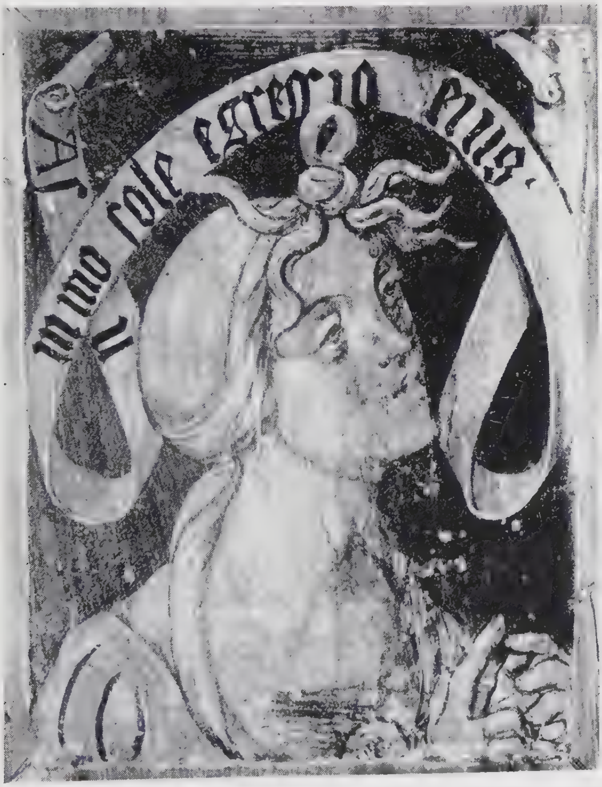
Al
in uno sole egregio nus

FIG 8. JUAN GASCÓ. SIBYL, COMPARTMENT OF A DOOR. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

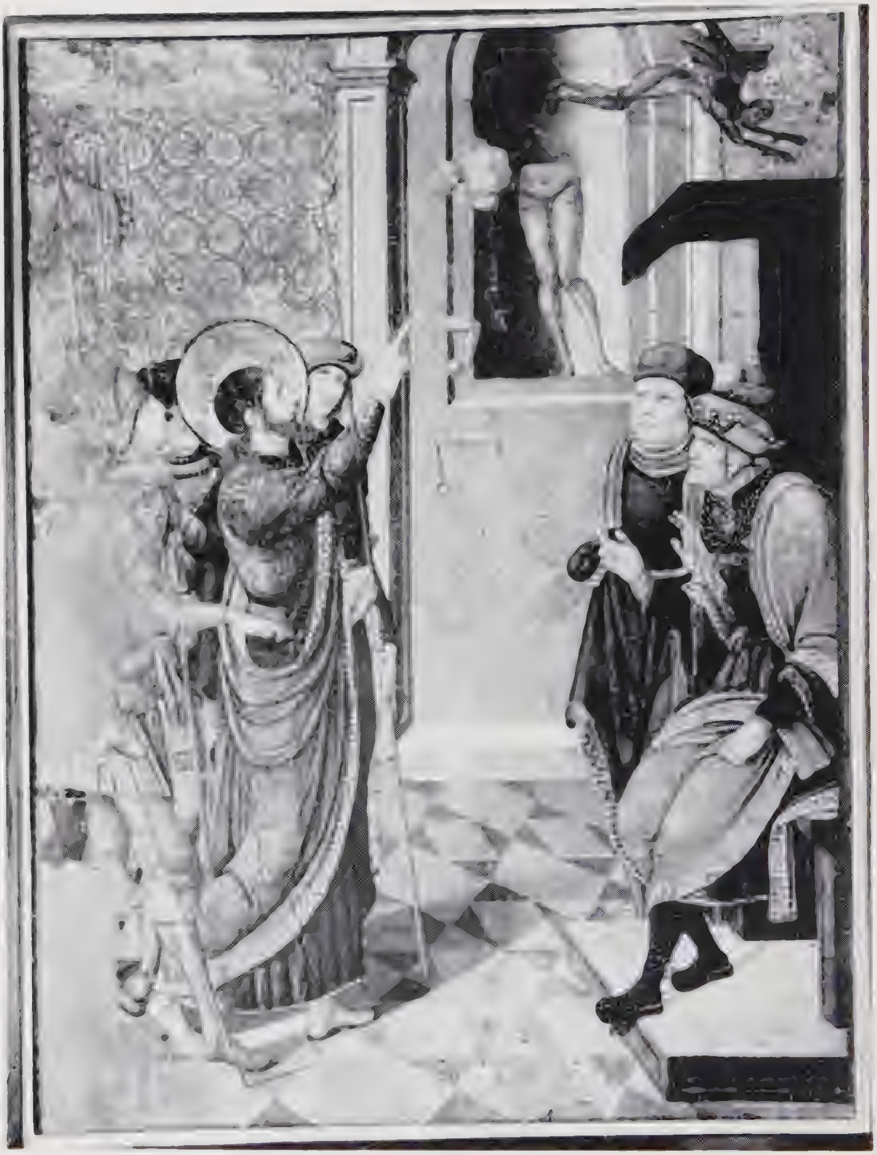

Fig. 9. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. BARTHOLOMEW SHATTERING THE IDOL. TORELLÓ COLLECTION, BARCELONA

(*Photo. Serra*)

Vich. The enterprise had a long drawn out history. As early as 1491, Gascó's predecessor in moving from western Spain to Catalonia, the Castilian Fernando Camargo,[33] did the predella and lateral doors; in 1513 Gascó contracted to paint the central effigy of St. Bartholomew, the surmounting Crucifixion, and *guardapolvos*; but it was not until many years later, on December 18, 1525, that he received the commission to execute the sections from which the preserved panel derives, namely eight lateral compartments the subjects of which are left to the decision of the hospital's authorities, figures of the four Evangelists to flank the doors, and certain ornamental additions. The picture owned by Señor Torelló shows that the authorities naturally chose for the eight spaces beside the effigy of the Apostle at least in part episodes from his life. Although still abiding by a gold background with his *motif* of rosettes, Gascó has now finally arrived at a style entirely of the Renaissance, with slender and rather graceful forms, even already edging upon mannerism. The youth facing us just at St. Bartholomew's right illustrates one phase that this incipient mannerism often assumes in the master's ultimate creations, a strained expressiveness in the countenance.

3. Undocumented Works Recognized by Gudiol, together with a Few Possibly Related Panels not Attributed by Him

Among the paintings in this category included in the Catalan scholar's monograph, the enthroned St. Lucy of the Vich Museum (Fig. 10) must be placed at the beginning of Gascó's career not only by reason of the style but also because, coming from what was then the great Augustinian monastery of San Juan de las Abadesas, it can scarcely be doubted that it was the central compartment of a retable of this virgin martyr recorded, without the artist's name, to have been executed for the church in 1505.[34] The attribution is confirmed by the general manner and the structural similarity of the face to such a countenance by Gascó as the St. Sebastian in the altarpiece from San Julián de Vilamirosa. The embossed design in the gold background is formalized into a more florid brocade than in the other

---

[33] For Camargo, see: Sanpere, *Los cuatrocentistas*, the pages listed in his index; my vol. VII, p. 45; and J. Mas in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras*, Barcelona, VI (1911–1912), 308 (the record in 1503 of his marriage at Barcelona, where he consistently dwelt).

[34] See Gudiol's monograph, p. xxvi.

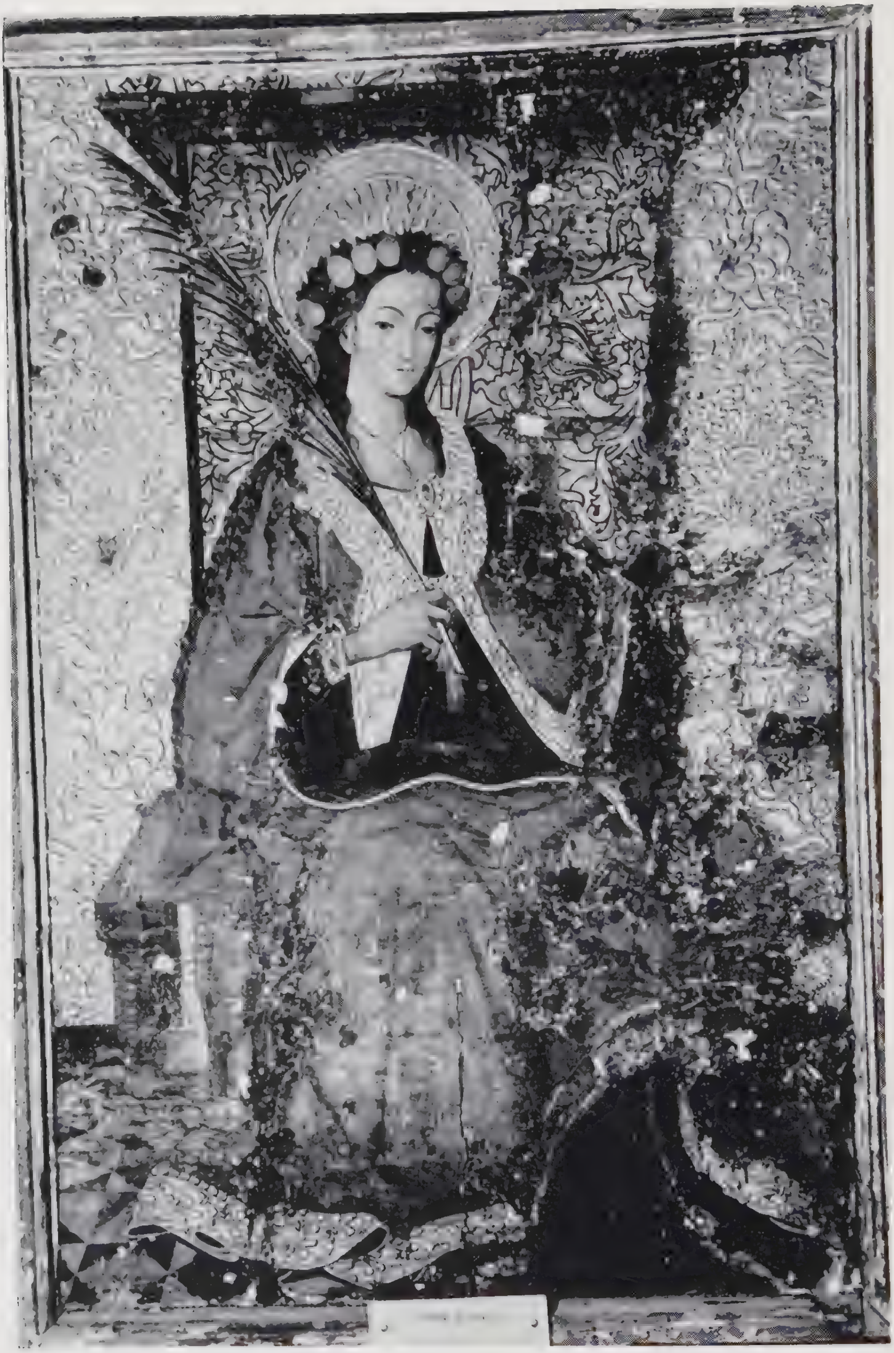

FIG. 10. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. LUCY. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

panels of this period in which he still indulged in raised stucco, and the brilliant red of St. Lucy's mantle in the midst of this gilded splendor makes the picture the most sumptuous that he has bequeathed to us.

The subjects, four further female saints, and the fact that the style implies the identical moment in his development supply arguments for the hypothesis that two battered sections of a predella still remaining at San Juan de las Abadesas may derive from the same retable as the painting in the Vich Museum. The canonized women, reading from left to right, are St. Ursula, next to her a maiden whose distinctive emblem has been lost in the wreckage, then St. Helen (with the emblems of the cross and three nails), and finally St. Margaret (with an unusually large and savage dragon at her feet) (Fig. 11). The types quite accord with the other feminine heads that Gascó was painting at about this time, for instance, in the retable of San Juan del Galí, the figures of the predella and the Salome and Herodias in the banquet of Herod.

In a panel of the *Anna selbdritt* in the Vich Museum, manifestly by Gascó and deriving from the convent of the Misericordia in the city, where it possibly constituted the centre of one of his retables, the delineation of the face of the Virgin's mother would indicate a date slightly subsequent to his activity for San Juan de las Abadesas, but the types of Our Lady and the Child, as well as of the angels symmetrically arranged in the interstices of the Gothic throne, do not allow us to set this date *very much* later (Fig. 12). The figuration of the unembossed gold background is similar to that in some of the subordinate compartments in the Galí assemblage.

Quite as obviously by Gascó is the lone panel of the Crucifixion with which the church of S. Francisco at Vich has endowed the Museum as No. 529 (Fig. 13). In a contract of April 11, 1504, for a non-extant retable of St. Michael in the cathedral of Vich, Gascó is asked to use as a model for one of the compartments a likewise lost painting of the Virgin adored by angels in S. Francisco (which belonged to the Friars Minor), and Gudiol[35] deduces that therefore he was the lost painting's author. The document, however, does not state him to have executed it, so that it may have been someone else's creation,[36] and in any case, since we do not know that a Crucifixion

[35] Monograph, p. ix.

[36] See above, p. 26, n. 23.

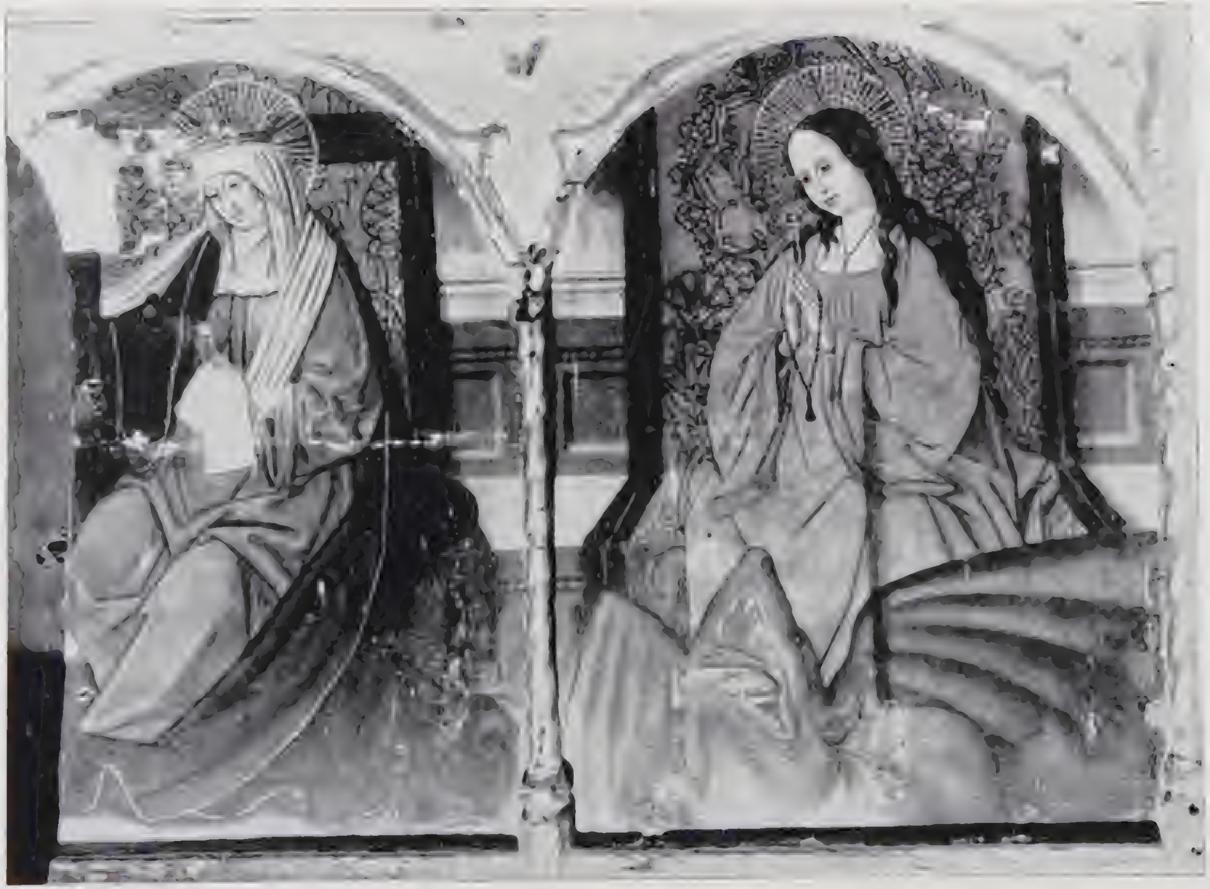

Fig. 11. JUAN GASCÓ. STS. HELEN AND MARGARET, SECTIONS OF A PREDELLA. CHURCH, SAN JUAN DE LAS ABADESAS

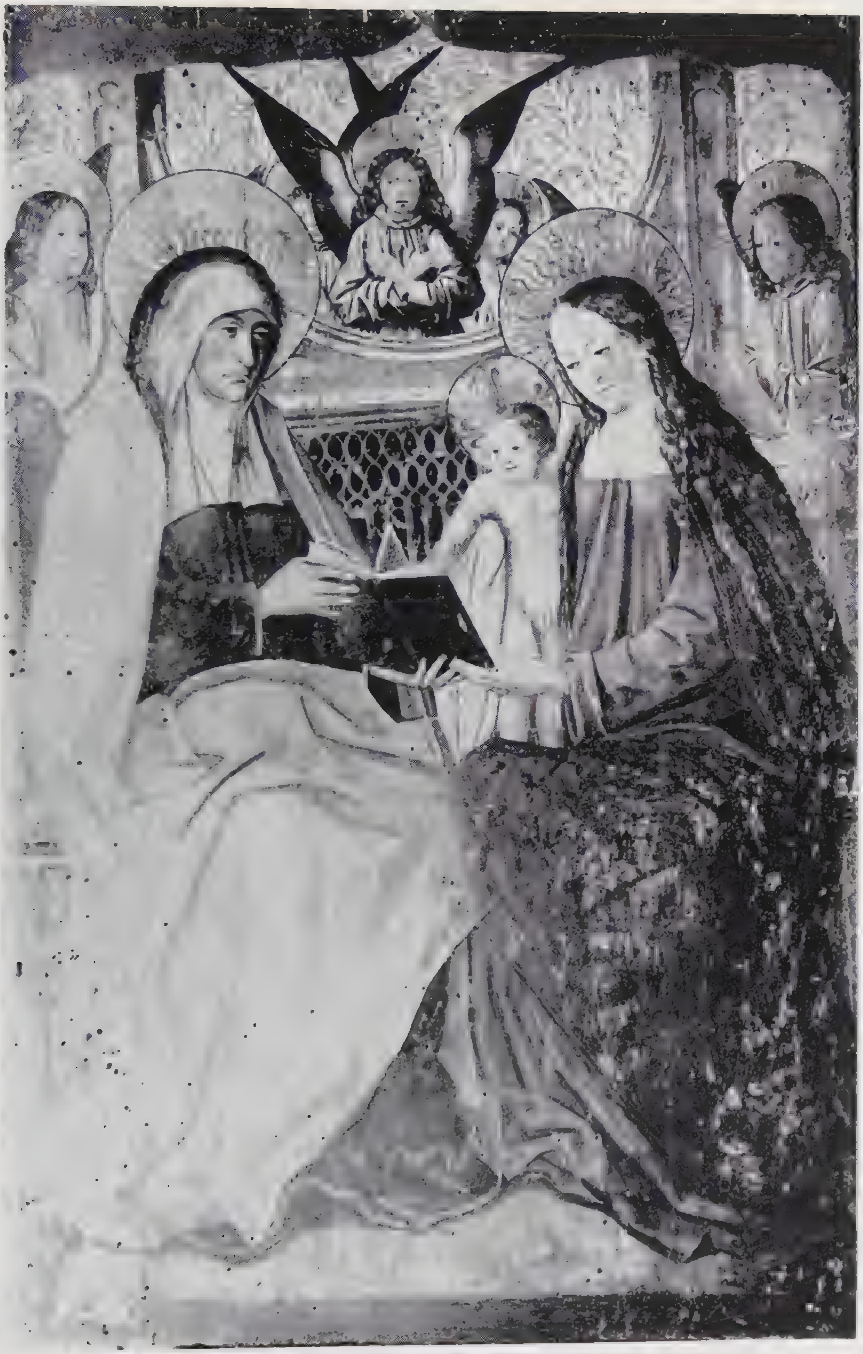

Fig. 12. JUAN GASCÓ. *ANNA SELBDRITT.* MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

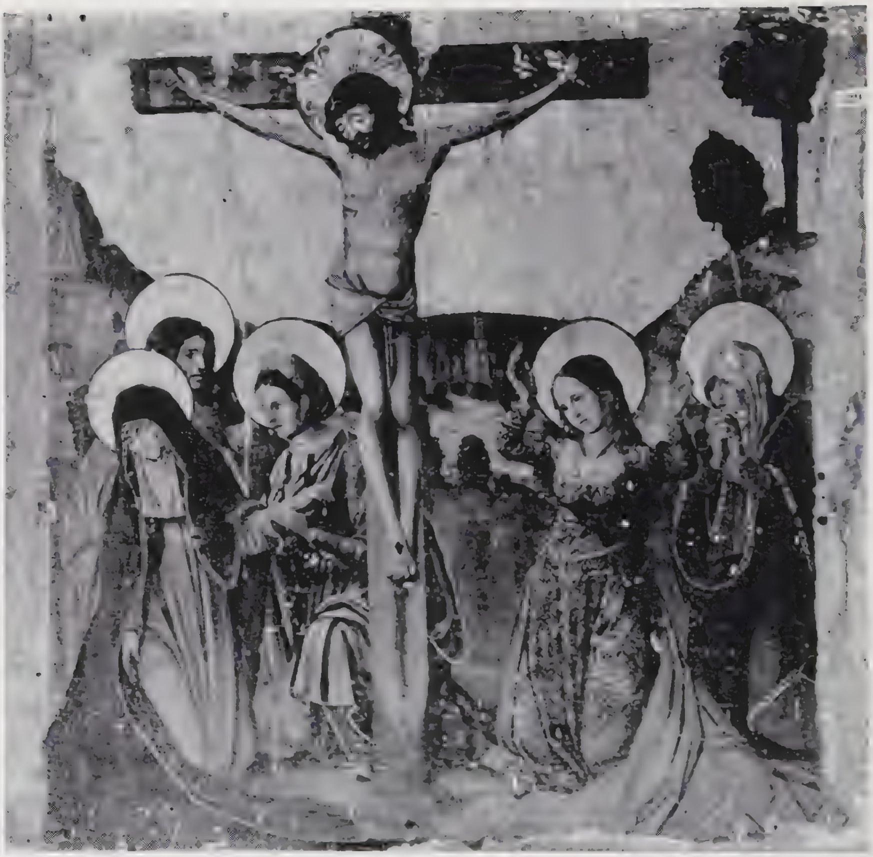

Fig. 13. JUAN GASCÓ. CRUCIFIXION FROM S. FRANCISCO, VICH. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

was attached to the picture of the Virgin and angels, we are very far from justified in assigning the panel, No. 529, to a time prior to the spring of 1504. Gascó treats this theme in much the same way and with much the same types from the beginning to the end of his career, even as late as the retable from San Vicente de Torelló, which otherwise belongs definitely to the Renaissance, and it is thus difficult on internal evidence to propose a date for the Crucifixion that now concerns us. It must be anterior to the example of 1521 from Prúit, where he adapted even the Crucifixion to his final manner, and its technical inferiority to the treatment in the Torelló retable would probably imply an earlier moment in the sixteenth century. The only figure that might point to execution subsequent to Gascó's Gothic period is the holy woman who behind the cross bends toward the swooning Virgin. The likeliest guess would then be some time in the second decade of the Cinquecento. The composition is more populous than his other renderings of the subject, including a more emotionally agitated Magdalene.

Gudiol is certainly right in ascribing to Gascó and to a stage in his life when he has wholeheartedly adopted the lessons of the Renaissance one of the soundest pieces of his craft, the retable from San Vicente de Torelló now in the Museum of Vich. We have already observed that to the stylistic proof for the attribution there is joined the supererogatory evidence of his known employment in other churches in the immediate region. St. Vincent stands in the main compartment, properly emphasized, like the St. Lucy from San Juan de las Abadesas, by the outstanding red of his garment, a dalmatic in the graceful delineation and suave coloring of which Gascó surpasses his ordinary standard. The Crucifixion occupies its orthodox spot, and at the sides are four scenes from St. Vincent's life, his arraignment, together with St. Valerius, before Dacian, his ordeal on the *eculeus* (Fig. 14), his release from torture by death in his bed, and the raven guarding his body from the beasts, while in the background there is enacted in smaller scale the consignment of his corpse to the sea, weighted with the millstone.

Throughout the altarpiece Gascó maintains the unexpectedly competent draughtsmanship that enlivens the panel from the Hospital de S. Bartolomé. A comparison of the Crucifixion with the very similar composition in the retable of San Juan del Galí reveals the advance attained by Gascó in the transmission of a convincing effect

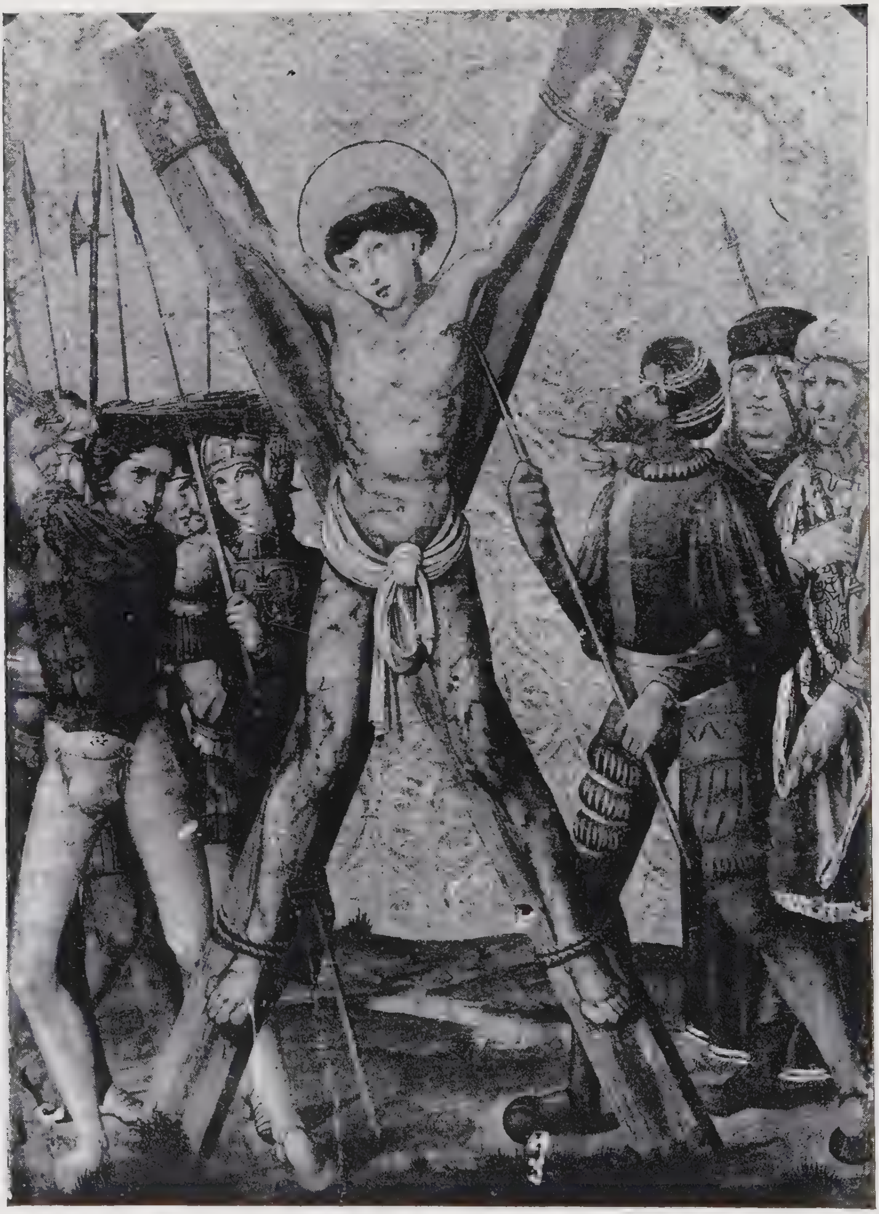

Fig. 14. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. VINCENT TORTURED ON THE *ECULEUS*, SECTION OF RETABLE. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Thomas*)

of emotion. The St. John in the Crucifixion and the flagellator in the scene of the ordeal on the *eculeus* illustrate the windblown locks that he often employs for accentuating the tensity of action in his later productions. Behind the boat from which St. Vincent's body is cast into the water there stretches a quite astounding landscape, with much of the beauty and the impressionistic treatment of a romantic setting that characterize the frescoes by Raphael and his shop in the Logge of the Vatican. The type of the youth at the left of St. Vincent in the episode of the arraignment practically constrains us to a belief in Gascó's cognizance of at least some of Pintoricchio's and Raphael's achievements. The manneristic tendency to a simpering expression of which we have caught a glimpse in the panel from the Hospital de S. Bartolomé reappears on the central effigy of St. Vincent and the helmeted lad watching the torture on the *eculeus.* The gold backgrounds are tooled with various brocaded *motifs.*

The analogy of the Virgin to Juan Gascó's feminine types perhaps renders credible Gudiol's attribution to him of a small panel of the Madonna of the Milk in the Vich Museum (Fig. 15), but the modelling and sophisticatedly pious expression of the Child, who with prophetic symbolism and disregard of the maternal breast grasps a cross held by an angel, argue strongly against the Spanish scholar's early dating. Indeed the close similarity of the Child to the Infant in an almost identical composition of the theme by Pedro Gascó in the same Museum [37] evokes the query whether the son may not in this case have finished a painting that the father left incomplete at his death, but it is hardly possible to bring the representation of Our Lady herself within Pedro's norms. Such half-lengths of the Madonna enter the Spanish school of the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries only under direct Italian or Flemish influence.

In some year considerably subsequent to the retable over the high altar of the parish church at San Pedro de Vilamajor, Gascó is demonstrated, by the internal evidence of the pieces that remain, to have done another retable for an altar in the edifice dedicated to Sts. Mark and Martial.[38] These pieces are two large panels in the Diocesan

[37] See below, p. 239.

[38] See the article by A. Gallardo in the *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya,* XLVIII (1938), 182, and for the popularity of St. Martial in Catalonia, my vol. VII, pp. 366 and 501. Gudiol (article in the *Veu de Catalunya,* December,

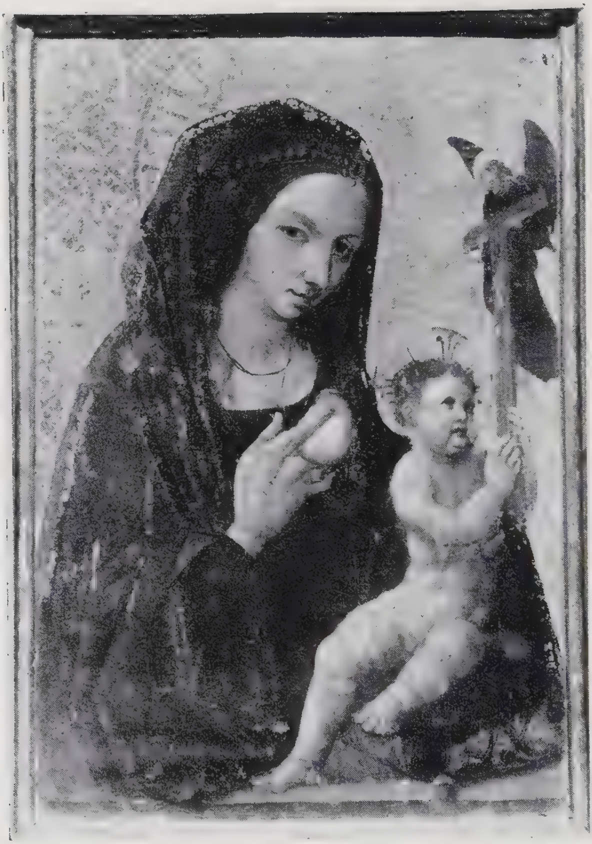

Fig. 15. JUAN GASCÓ. (FINISHED BY PEDRO GASCÓ?). MADONNA OF THE MILK. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Thomas*)

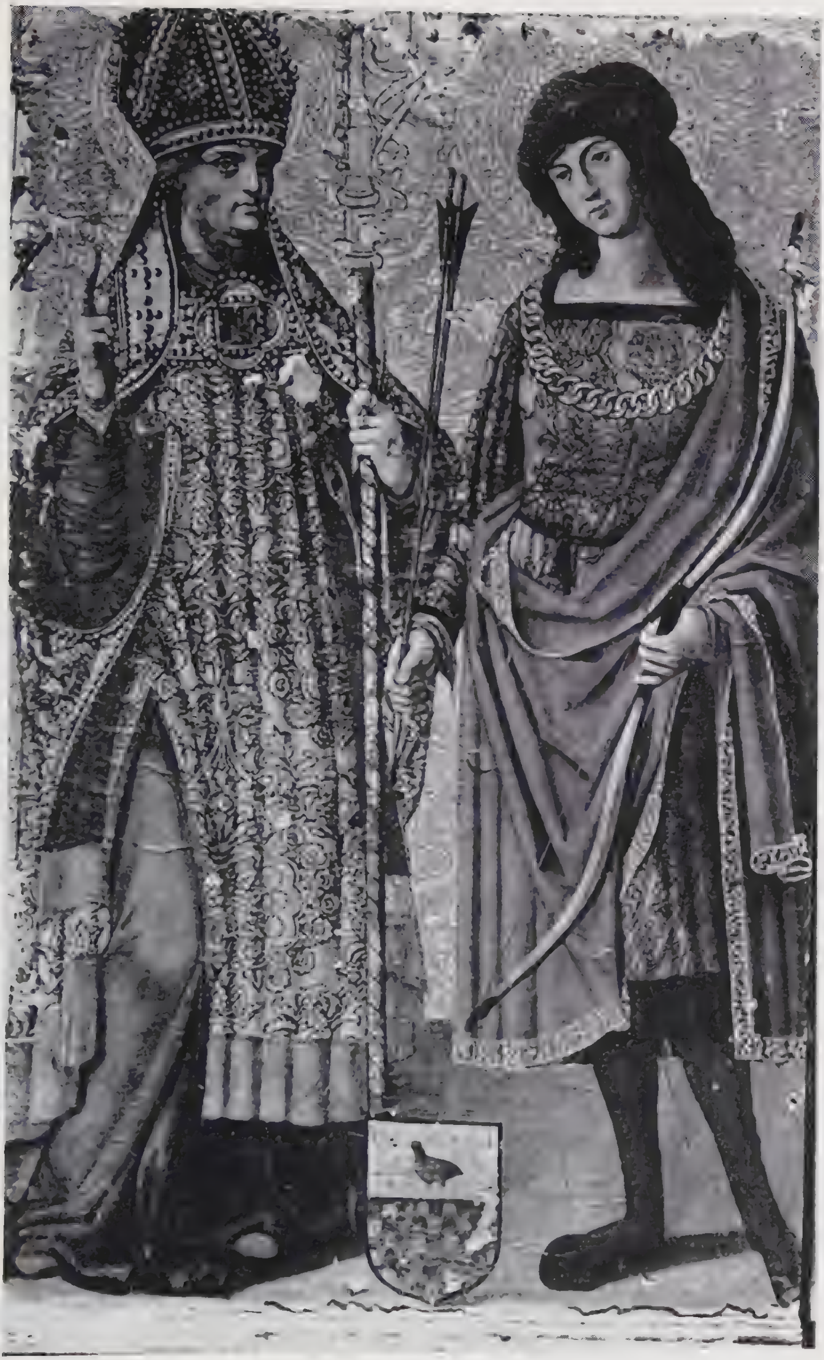

FIG. 16. JUAN GASCÓ. STS. MARTIAL AND SEBASTIAN
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

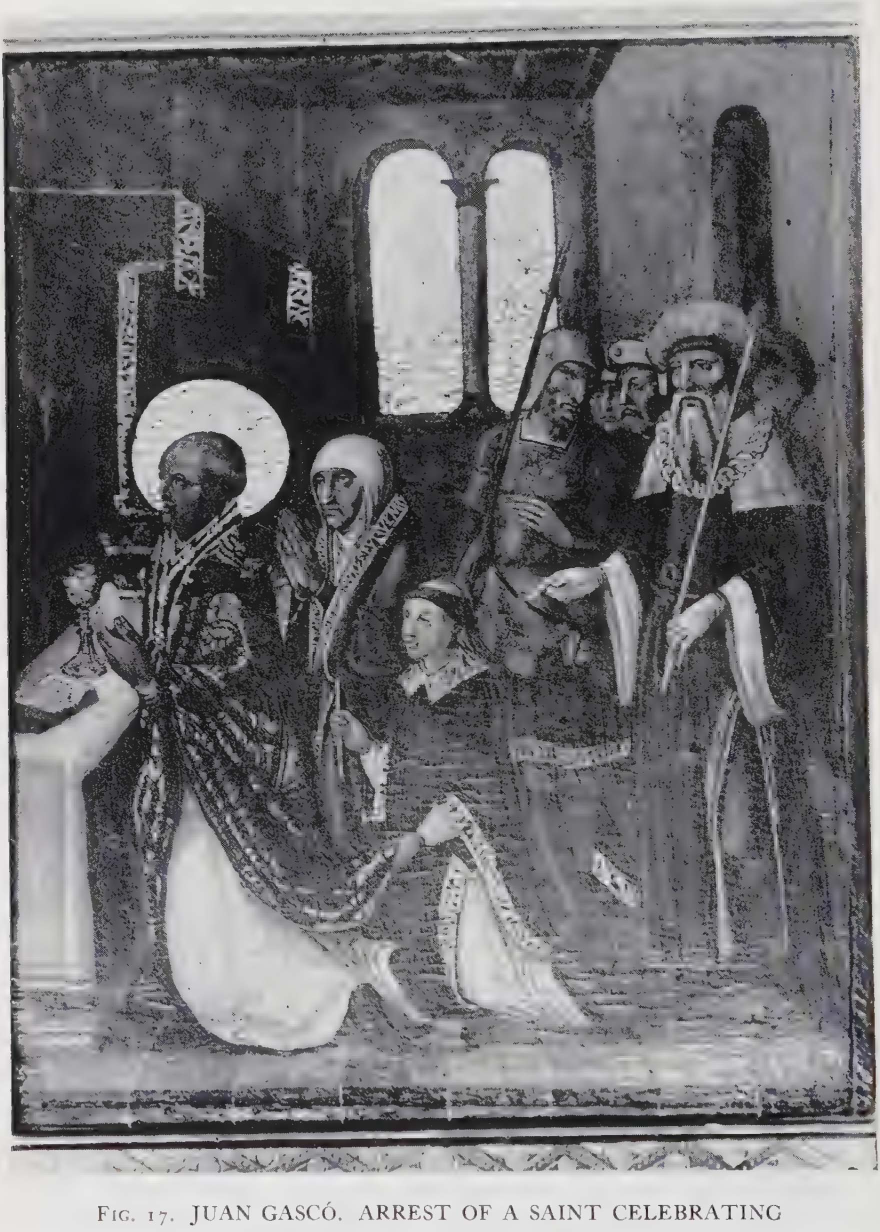

Fig. 17. JUAN GASCÓ. ARREST OF A SAINT CELEBRATING MASS. BARNOLA COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Museum at Barcelona, each with paired effigies of saints, Martial and Sebastian in one (Fig. 16), the Magdalene and Apollonia in the other. At the bottom of the former panel are the *armes parlantes*, a quail above a charge of vair, that belonged to a family prominent at San Pedro de Vilamajor with the name of Gual de Vilarrassa,[39] and Gudiol [40] conjectures that the donor of the retable may have been a Narcis de Gual, a distinguished member of the family in the early sixteenth century. The style is wholly characteristic of the period in Gascó's life when he has succumbed entirely to the invasion of the Italian Renaissance, the St. Sebastian, for instance, being one of his most Umbrian figures.

It is not impossible that we should recognize a further relic of this retable in a panel of the Barnola Collection at Barcelona depicting the arrest of a saint while he is saying mass (Fig. 17). It was thus that the persecutors of St. Mark surprised him, and the only objection to this identification of the theme would be that his captors are usually represented in the scene as already casting about his neck the rope by which he was dragged through the streets.[41] In any case, the panel must have been executed at the same stage in his development as the pieces in the Diocesan Museum at Barcelona. The deacon of the mass is a facial repetition of the central St. Vincent from Torelló, and the window of the church in which the saint is celebrating looks out, not upon the sky, but upon one of Gascó's brocaded gold backgrounds. The chief significance of the picture is that, of all his works, it is the one that most insistently recalls the productions of the Valencian Artés Master.

4. UNDOCUMENTED WORKS NOT REGISTERED BY GUDIOL

A rather fine rendering of the Crucifixion, No. 30 in the Catalogue of the Vich Museum but of undiscovered provenience, is demonstrated a creation of Juan Gascó by the close analogy in types as well as composition to the version in the retable of San Juan del Galí,

---

1912) states that his cult was diffused particularly in the region of San Pedro de Vilamajor.

[39] A. Gallardo, *op. cit.*, 179. The Catalan word for quail is *guatlla*.

[40] *Op. cit.*

[41] Vols. II, p. 375, and VI, p. 562. St. Matthew was actually slain at the altar (see vol. X, p. 315), but in the Barnola panel the persecutors are merely standing in the background.

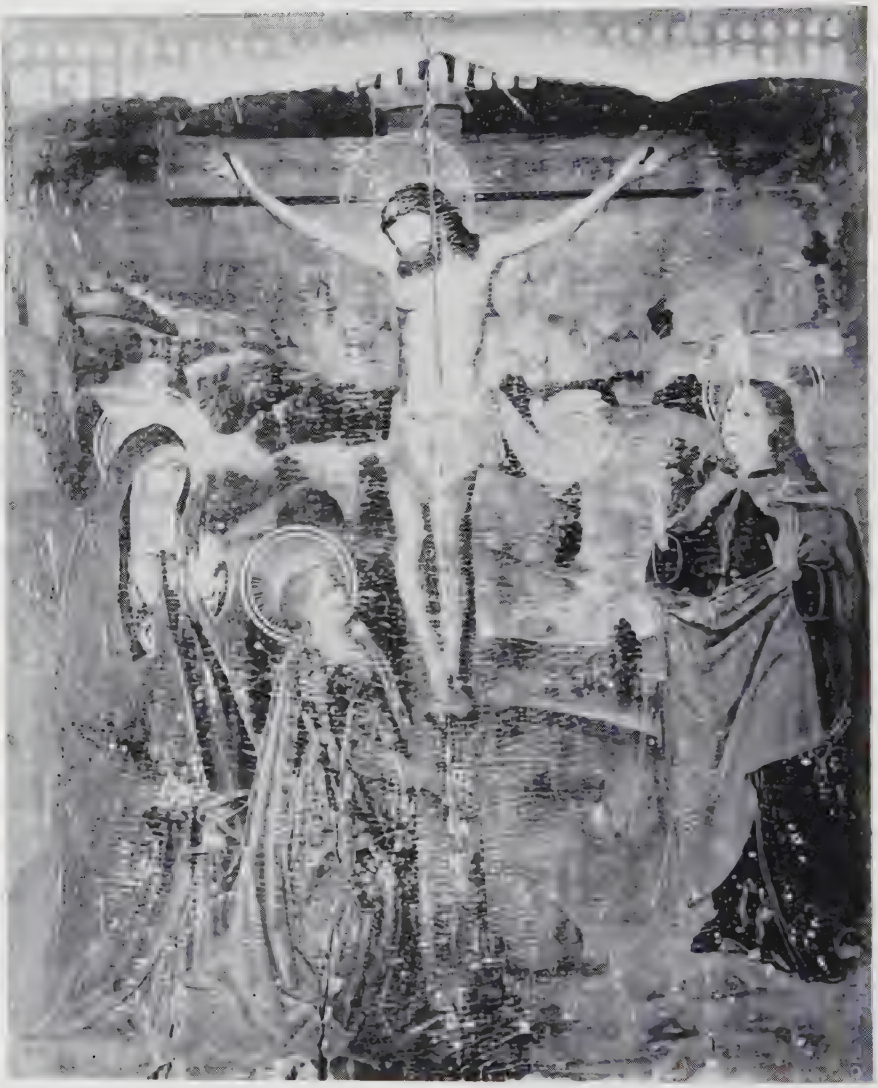

Fig. 18. JUAN GASCÓ. CRUCIFIXION. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

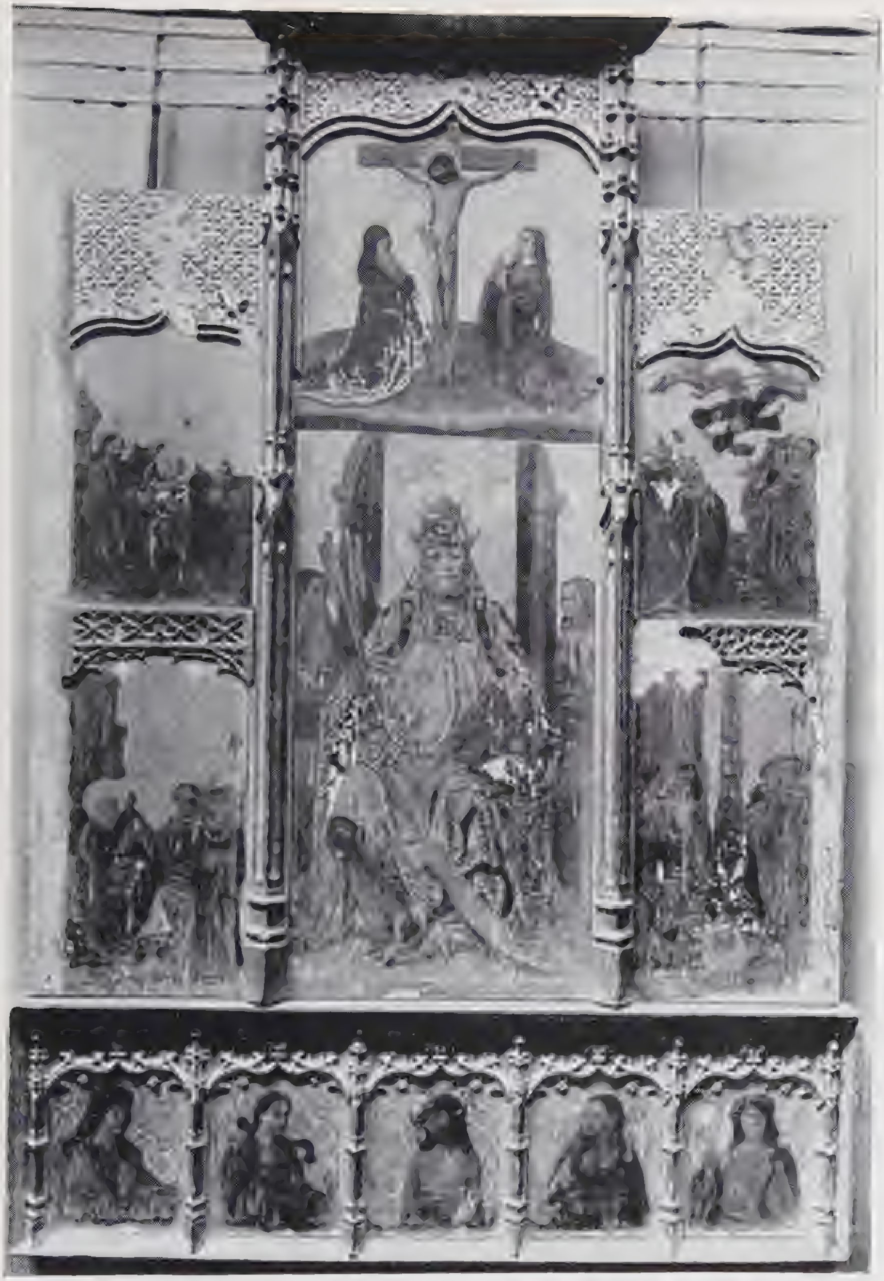

FIG. 19. JUAN GASCÓ RETABLE OF ST PETER. MUSEUM OF CATALAN ART, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

and it thus should be assigned to about the same early phase of his evolution (Fig. 18).

At Palautordera, close to San Pedro de Vilamajor, an artist who is plainly Gascó left a whole retable dedicated to St. Peter and now in the Barcelona Museum (Fig. 19). Slightly posterior in date to the altarpiece under the same invocation once at Vilamajor itself, the Palautordera example is probably about contemporary with the St. Barbara of 1516 in the Vich Museum, who stands before a throne of the Renaissance identical with that upon which the Apostle is seated in the principal compartment. Two adoring angels very similar to those in corresponding places in the panel of the *Anna selbdritt* in the Vich Museum peer over the throne's arms, and the surmounting Crucifixion nearly duplicates the version in the retable of San Julián de Vilamirosa. Of the four lateral sections, the first and last, the calling of Sts. Peter and Andrew and the former's martyrdom, reduce to differently shaped spaces and to smaller scope the compositions in the altarpiece of San Pedro de Vilamajor. The other pair depict an encounter of Sts. Peter and Paul with Simon Magus and their discomfiture of the latter in his attempt at aviation. The predella exhibits, as half-lengths, in the middle the Christ of the Mass of St. Gregory, at the extremes Sts. Cosmas and Damian, and in the other two divisions the Magdalene and a virgin martyr. The unraised gold backgrounds comprise, as usual with Gascó, several brocaded patterns.

Stylistic evidence would imply approximately the same time in Gascó's evolution for three fragments with the standing figures of Elijah, St. Severus, and St. Sigismund in a private collection at Vich (Fig. 20) but coming from an *ermita* south of the city, near Seva. In a retable for the Carmelite monastery at Vich upon which at intervals he was engaged from as early as 1505 to practically the end of his life, he agreed on May 17, 1519, to do a number of pieces, including, on the *guardapolvos*, a figure of Elijah. Inasmuch as this Prophet was thought to have founded the Carmelite Order in the Hebrew past, he wears in the picture privately owned at Vich the Carmelite habit and is enveloped in a scroll (like the Prophets of San Pedro de Vilamajor) inscribed with a Latin sentence in which his retreat, Mount Carmel, is mentioned; [42] but it is difficult to enter-

---

[42] I am unable to decipher the rest of the inscription and therefore to state its source.

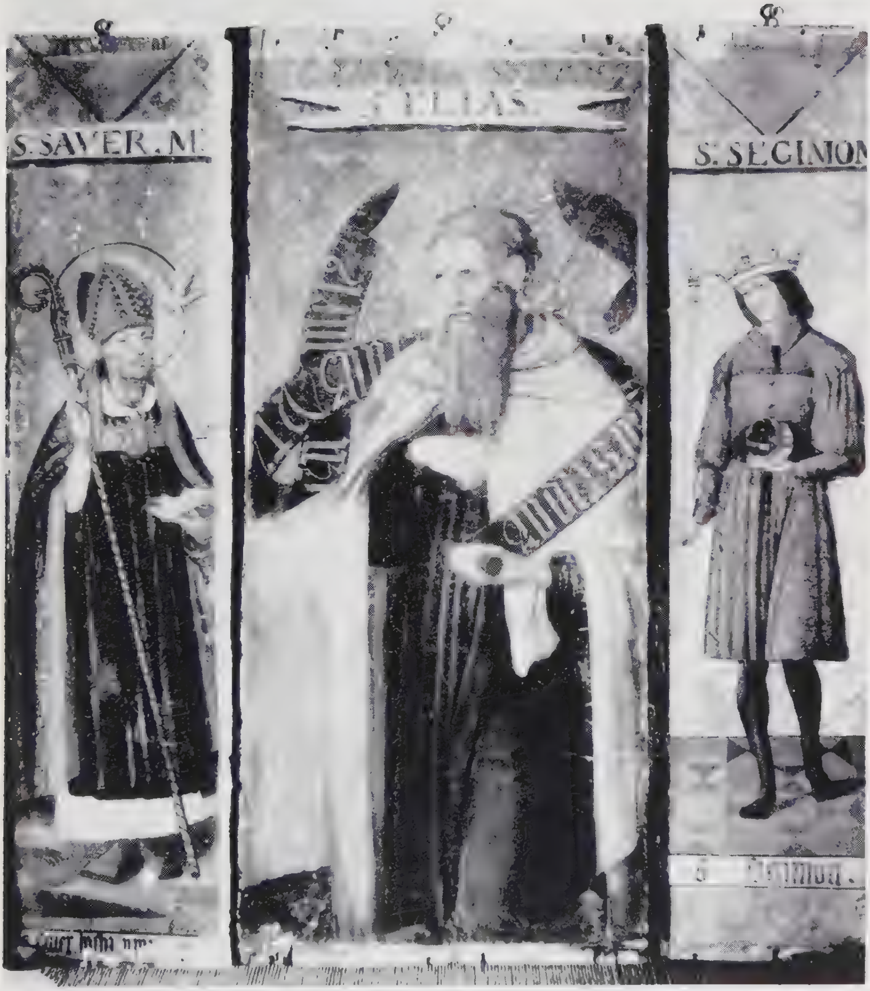

Fig. 20. JUAN GASCÓ. ELIJAH, ST. SEVERUS, AND ST. SIGISMUND.
PRIVATE COLLECTION, VICH
(*Photo. Mas*)

tain the bold hypothesis that the three pieces which now concern us were once parts of the Carmelite retable and thence were relegated to the *ermita* at Seva, since the description of the retable itemizes, not Sts. Severus and Sigismund, but other sacred personages as aligned with Elijah on the *guardapolvos*. Nevertheless, the figures of the martyred bishop of Barcelona, St. Severus, and of the royal St. Sigismund, both in slightly smaller scale, probably belonged to the same original retable as the Elijah, for they were all found in the one *ermita,* and the Catalan inscriptions of the names at the tops of the three panels, though obviously later superimpositions, consist of the identical sort of Roman capitals.[43] St. Sigismund is a rarity in Spanish cults,[44] although not entirely absent; [45] but the mention of persons called Sigismund in the documents [46] about Juan Gascó shows that it was not an uncommon name in Catalonia of the period, and the canonized king probably owes his presence in the fragments now in a private collection at Vich to the prominence of some gentleman with this appellation in fostering the artistic enterprise.

In 1525 Gascó contracted to do in the main body of the Carmelite retable four compartments representing the Tree of Jesse, the Expulsion of Sts. Joachim and Anne from the Temple, the Meeting at the Golden Gate, and the Nativity of Mary; and, if we are willing to admit one of the frequent slight alterations in iconographic schemes, we are at liberty to amuse ourselves with the guess that they are preserved in a cycle, now deposited by the Prado in the Museum of Pontevedra, which comprises the last two themes but, instead of the first two, the Visitation and Purification. In any case, the Pontevedra panels are unmistakably his creation and were obviously produced in his last days (Fig. 21). Dogmatism, however, on their provenience from the Carmelite monastery is far from allowable, since the subjects were commonplaces in all altarpieces dedicated to Our Lady. The Meeting at the Golden Gate, the Nativity of Mary,

---

[43] Beneath Sts. Severus and Sigismund there are preserved the original Gothic, Catalan inscriptions of their names, in the case of the former followed by the Catalan for "bishop and martyr."

[44] In a review of my volumes VII and VIII in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 2 (1942), 106, J. Ainaud rightly points out that the figure that has been called St. Sigismund in Huguet's retable of the Constable (see my vol. VII, p. 67) is really St. Catherine of Alexandria. Her emblem of the wheel in the lower left corner has not been wholly erased by the deterioration.

[45] See below, pp. 242 and 526.

[46] Gudiol's monograph, 9, 14, and 19.

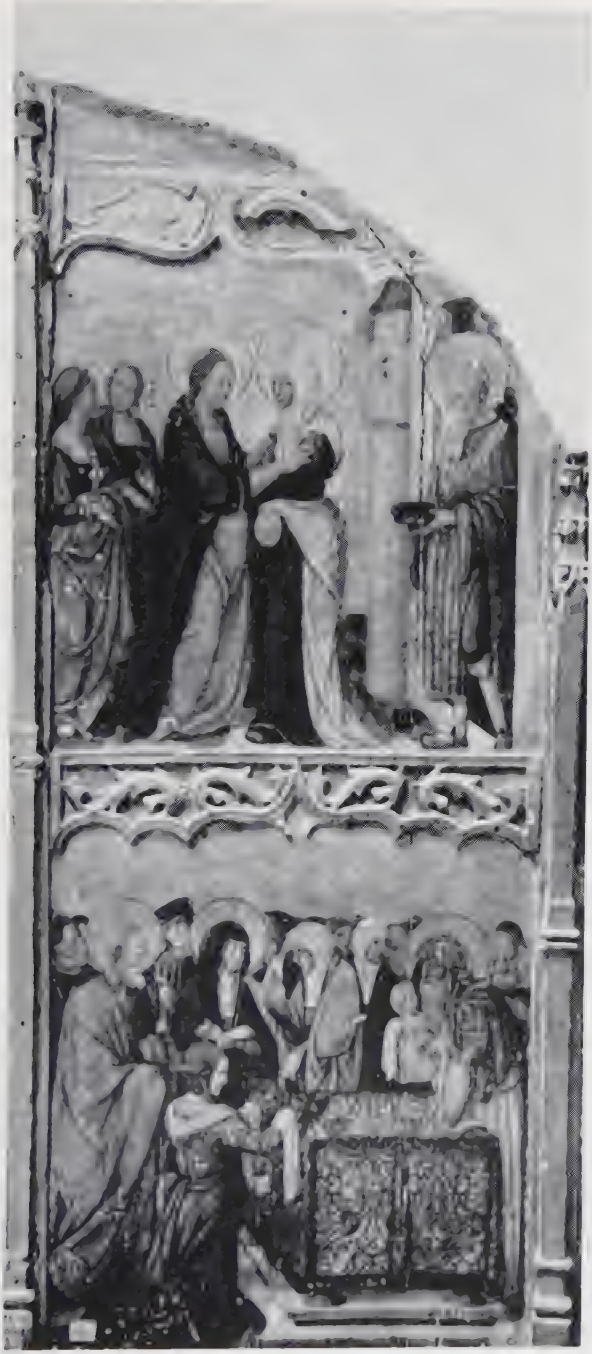

Fig. 21. JUAN GASCÓ. VISITATION AND PURIFICATION, SECTIONS OF RETABLE. MUSEUM, PONTEVEDRA

(Photo. Ruiz Vernacci)

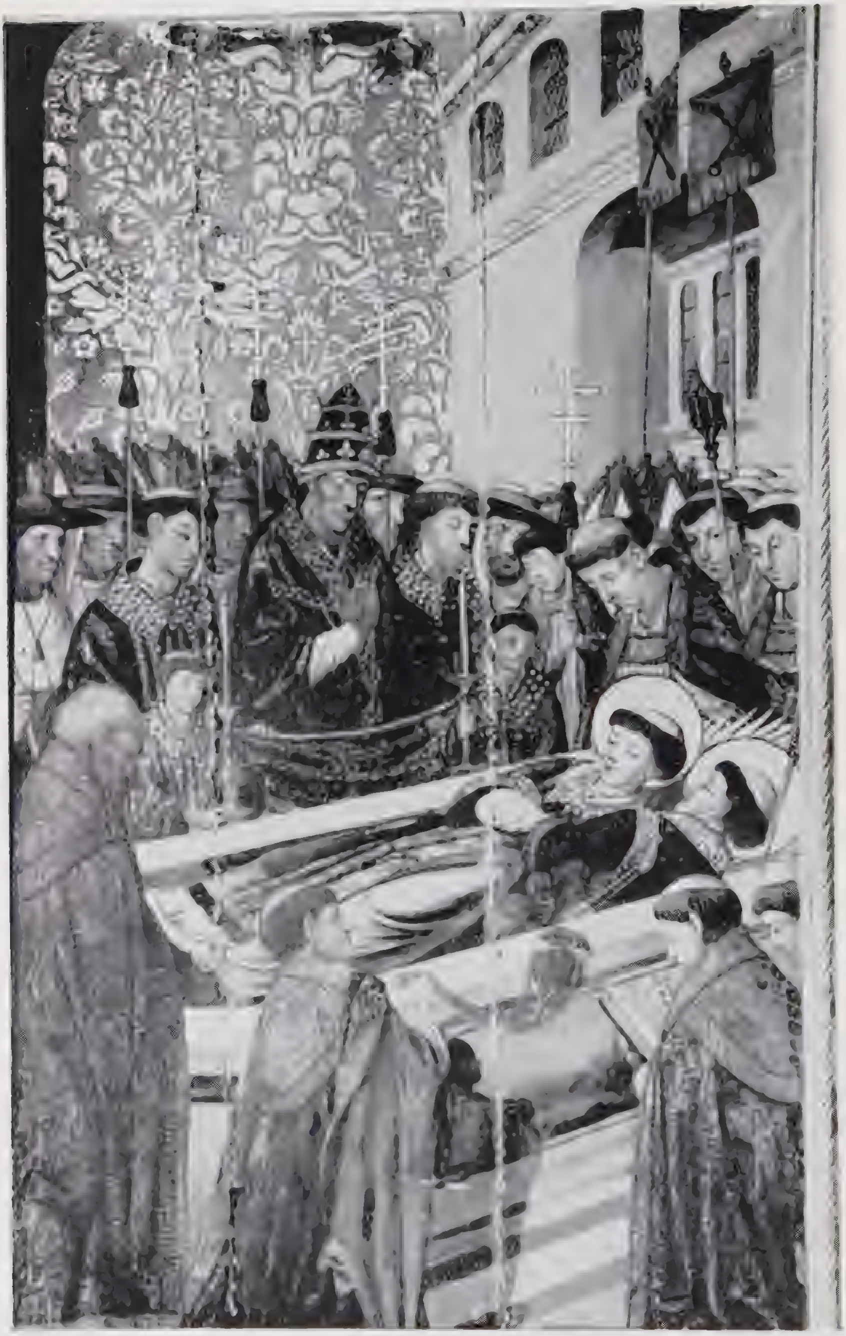

FIG. 22. JUAN GASCÓ. ENTOMBMENT OF ST. STEPHEN.
PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

and the Purification, for example, were comprised in Gascó's (lost) retable of the Iglesia de la Rodona at Vich, but, inasmuch as they occurred in its predella,[47] they cannot be identified with the panels in the Prado, which come from an altarpiece's lateral divisions.

The head of Zacharias in the Visitation literally repeats that of the Elijah in a Vich private collection; the St. Elizabeth in this scene, the St. Anne in the Meeting at the Golden Gate and in the Nativity of Mary, and Anna the prophetess in the Purification embody a type for women much used by Gascó in his last period, illustrated by the Virgin in the Prúit Crucifixion; and one of his characteristic sentimental youths can be seen in the Purification just behind St. Joseph. The composition of this scene betrays a tendency to a crowding with supernumeraries that emerges in many of his final productions but is visible as early as the Flagellation at San Pedro de Vilamajor. The old mediaeval Spanish affection for the decorative values of brocaded fabrics is still very evident in the costumes of the Pontevedra series and in the covering of the altar in the Purification. The patterns tooled in the gold backgrounds are, as usual with him, diversified, taking the form, in the Meeting at the Golden Gate, of his beloved rosettes.

Another instance of an at least possible survival from one of Gascó's documented retables is a large panel that has long been owned by the Provincial Museum at Gerona, depicting the story of how the body of St. Lawrence graciously moved over to the side in his sepulchre at Rome to give the place of honor at the right within the same tomb to the remains of St. Stephen (Fig. 22). In his contract of November 20, 1520,[48] to do a retable of St. Stephen for the church of S. Esteban at Granollers de la Plana (near Gurb),[49] the theme of the last of the six narrative compartments is specified as the very scene in the panel now at Gerona. We shall find that paintings until recently extant in the church at San Esteban de Bas assignable on internal evidence to Gascó but for the most part different in subjects from those prescribed in the contract of Granollers de la Plana demonstrate him to have done another retable dedicated to the protomartyr. It is not out of the question that the Gerona panel should be a still further member of the series once at San Esteban de Bas, and the divergence in the figuration of the gold background would not negative such an hypothesis, since the designs varied within the sections at San Esteban de Bas itself. Moreover, we should expect a picture in the Provincial Museum of Gerona to have come from somewhere in this province, in which San Esteban de Bas, but not Granollers de la Plana, lies. According to the theory of probability, Gascó would not in a lifetime have been called upon to do three retables of Stephen, and the likelihood is perhaps as great for a derivation of the Gerona panel from Granollers de la Plana as from San Esteban de Bas. An argument for the former alternative is the definite mention of the subject in the contract of 1520, whereas otherwise it is rarely represented in the many Spanish cycles from St. Stephen's life, although it does occur in the series by Rexach or a follower in the church of S. Esteban at Valencia.[20] The central effigy from the retable of Granollers de la Plana was preserved in modern times in a near-lying estate,[21] but it has now, so far as my knowledge goes, disappeared from our ken.

---

[47] Gudiol's monograph, 33.

[48] The date is given as August 5, 1520, by Bofill (*Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Vich*, XVII, 1924, p. 177), but it must be a mistake since the actual document published by Gudiol names November 20.

[49] Not the town of Granollers just north of Barcelona, the parish church of which is also dedicated to St. Stephen and once contained the great retable by the Vergós shop: see vol. VII, pp. 416 ff.

The Gerona panel is sufficiently authenticated as a work of Juan Gascó by the multiplication of countenances similar to those of the standing figure of St. Vincent from Torelló in the St. Stephen and in a number of the clerics taking part in the sepulchral ceremony and by the emergence, in the officiating pope and cardinals, of the hard, stern visages that he affected for older personages in the mode of the Artés Master. The composition is so overcrowded that many of the attendant ecclesiastics are entirely hidden except for their mitres which make a pattern against the background.

It is within the range of credibility that a further piece of the retable of Granollers de la Plana is preserved to us in a panel formerly in the possession of Axel Beskow at Stockholm, depicting St. Stephen either preaching or disputing with the Jewish ecclesiastics (Fig. 23). The former subject is definitely demanded in the contract; but the women who appear among the protomartyr's congregation in the representation of the theme at San Esteban de Bas are absent from the Beskow picture, in which the majority of his audience look like

---

[20] Vol. VI, p. 46.

[21] Boll. [illegible]

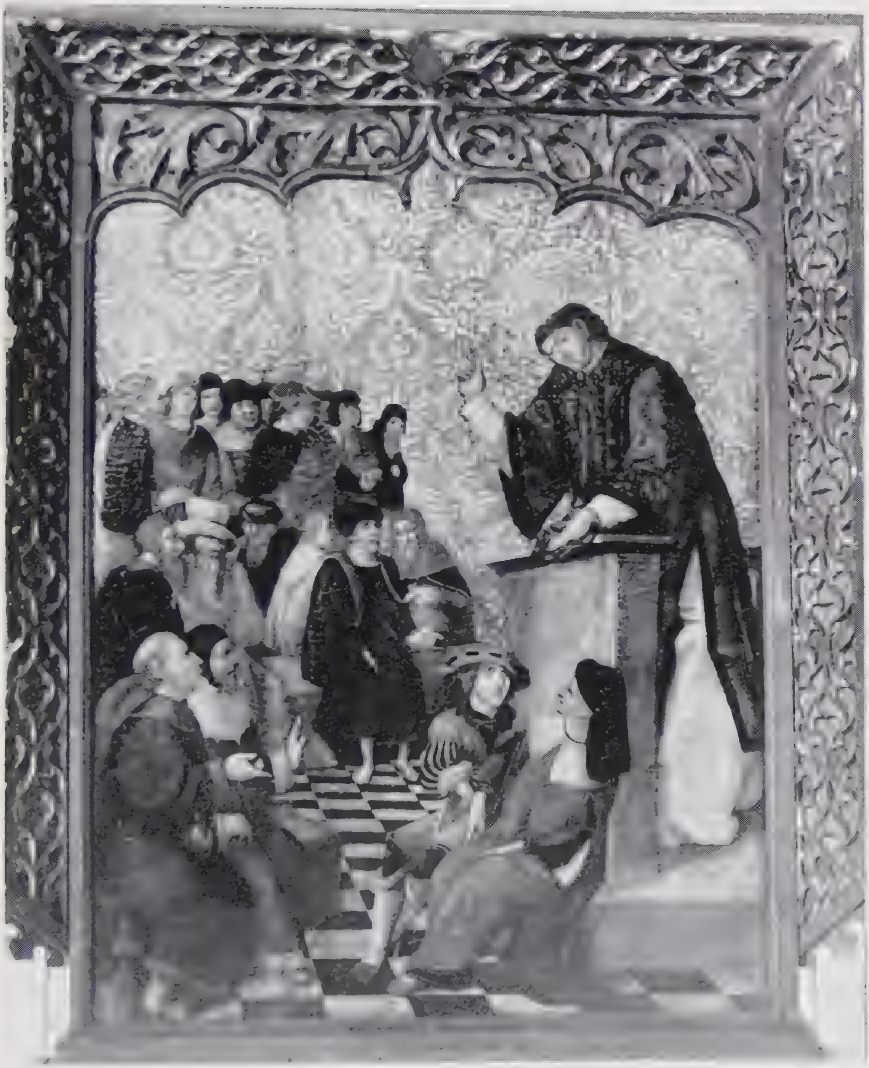

FIG. 23. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. STEPHEN PREACHING.
BESKOW COLLECTION, STOCKHOLM

Hebrews learned in the law. Instead of the disputation, the contract asks for the scene of "how they led him to the disputation," referring to the words in Acts VI, 12, "And brought him to the council"; but we could readily assume that so slight a change occurred in the iconographical program as to permit the substitution of his actual contention with the council's members. If the subject is the disputation, however, the source of the panel might be San Esteban de Bas, where it is not depicted in any of the pieces. I find it hard to see how anyone could deny the panel to Juan Gascó since the types and methods accord in general with his standards and some of the heads are literally repeated in his other works. We shall discover, for instance, that the youth just beneath St. Stephen reappears at the same spot in the version of the preaching formerly at San Esteban de Bas, and he falls within a class of young men that peer forth at us everywhere in Juan's works, as in the soldier to the immediate left of St. Vincent's *eculeus* in the retable from Torelló. The aged listener in the lower left corner is used for the rôle of Hosea on the door in the Vich Museum. The jewelled designs in the orphreys of St. Stephen's dalmatic are practically identical with those employed for deacons' vestments in the Gerona panel and at San Esteban de Bas. There is a certain relaxation of tight draughtsmanship in passages of the picture, especially in the group in the background, but I suspect that this characteristic is due to modern restoration rather than to the collaboration of Juan's son, Pedro, at an early moment in his career when he may be supposed to have been marked by a greater dependence upon his father than his surely authenticated productions reveal. The pattern of the brocaded gold background is different in the Gerona picture, but we have already observed that such changes are likely to take place within a single retable by Gascó.

Until their burning in the civil war, four of the series from a retable of St. Stephen at San Esteban de Bas (in the province of Gerona but close to several other villages in which Juan Gascó is documented as active) were built into the lateral walls of the apse of the parish church, representing the protomartyr's ordination, his delivery of a sermon, the invention of his body (with conspicuous emphasis upon the roses that distinguished his remains from those of the others who were buried with him), and a cleric blessing the halt, blind, and variously afflicted who resort to the saint's shrine for relief. A fifth compartment, which, at the time of my visit to

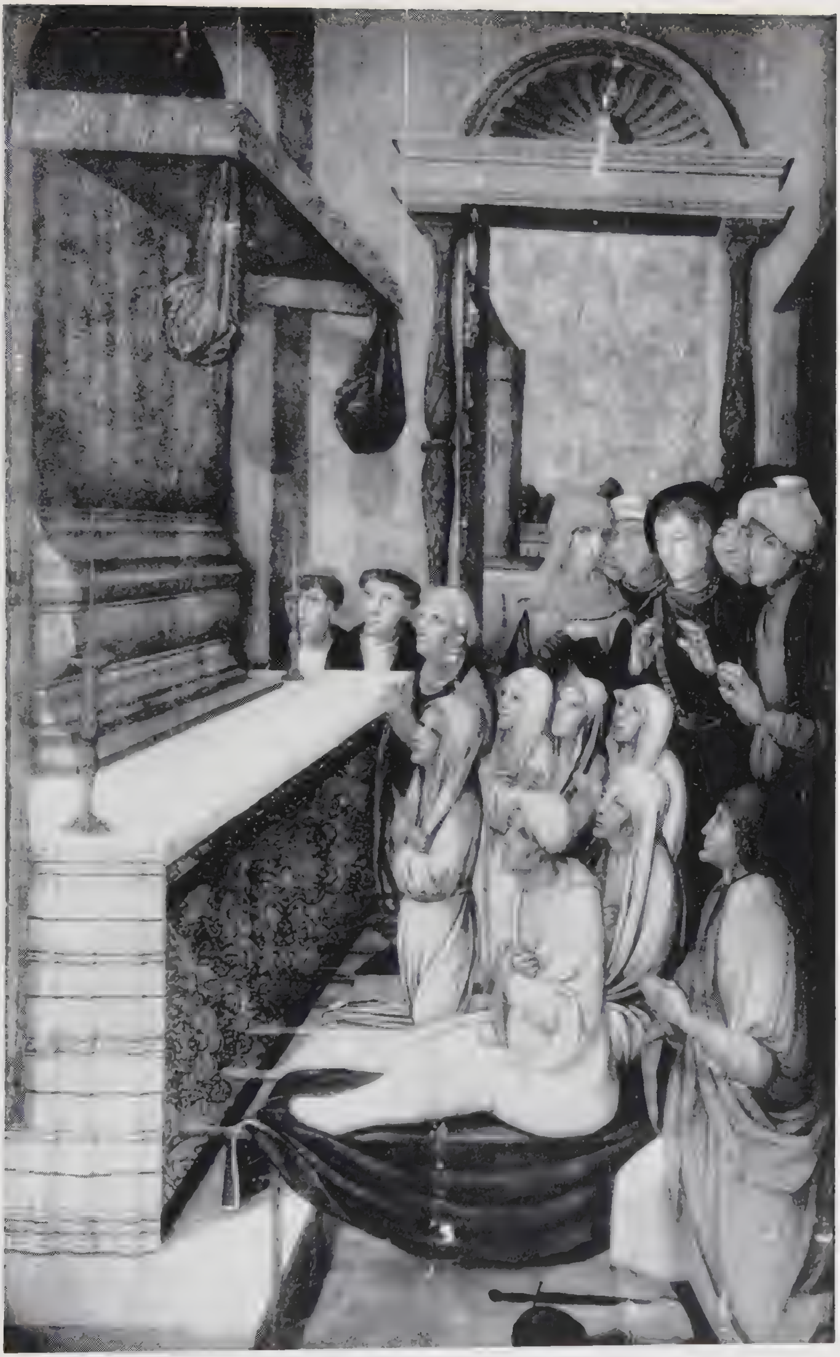

FIG. 24. JUAN GASCÓ (ASSISTED BY PEDRO GASCÓ?). RESURRECTION OF SIX CORPSES AT ST. STEPHEN'S SHRINE, SECTION OF RETABLE. HOUSE OF PRIEST, SAN ESTEBAN DE BAS

(*Photo. Mas*)

the town in 1934, was, if I remember, kept in the house of the parish priest (Fig. 24) and probably also suffered annihilation, depicted the resurrection of six corpses at the shrine but without the posthumous appearance of St. Stephen that is usually included in the iconography of the theme.[52] The only question in regard to the attribution that could be raised is whether Juan Gascó was here assisted, as has been suggested, by his son Pedro. No works surely assignable to Pedro by document or style substantiate the hypothesis, since the forms in them fail to approximate those of his father so closely as do the types in the series of San Esteban de Bas; but it is quite possible that he did collaborate with Juan at times, and in such cases he would have subordinated his own proclivities and followed the paternal models. In a few passages, as particularly in the compartment of the priest receiving the sufferers at the shrine, a slight looseness and dryness may betray Pedro's intrusion, but, on the other hand, the precise modes of Juan are quite as much relaxed in the panel from the Hospital de S. Bartolomé, where no one has ever proposed to discern the son's participation. It must not, however, be forgotten that Pedro did another retable in the town.[53]

The series at San Esteban de Bas teemed with figures that are constants in Juan's many other productions. In the scene of the ordination St. Peter repeated the central figure in the retable of Palautordera and even sat upon the same throne of the Renaissance. The Apostle at the extreme left had a countenance exactly like that of the soldier in a corresponding spot in the compartment of St. Vincent's arraignment from Torelló, and his companion carrying the vessel of holy water displayed the tousled hair characteristic of Juan's last period. In the populous episode of St. Stephen's sermon, the affected kind of youth frequent at this period in his output, as in the effigy in the main panel from Torelló, reappeared prominently just beneath the protomartyr's pulpit, and several of the women in the congregation are found in the Pontevedra Birth of the Virgin. These ladies were called into service once more in the group whom the priest blessed at St. Stephen's shrine, and the cleric himself had such counterparts as the St. Valerius brought before the judge with St. Vincent in the Torelló assemblage and the presumptive St. Mark in the panel of the Barnola Collection. The two deacons accompany-

---

[52] Vol. VII, pp. 810 and 827.

[53] See below, p. 246.

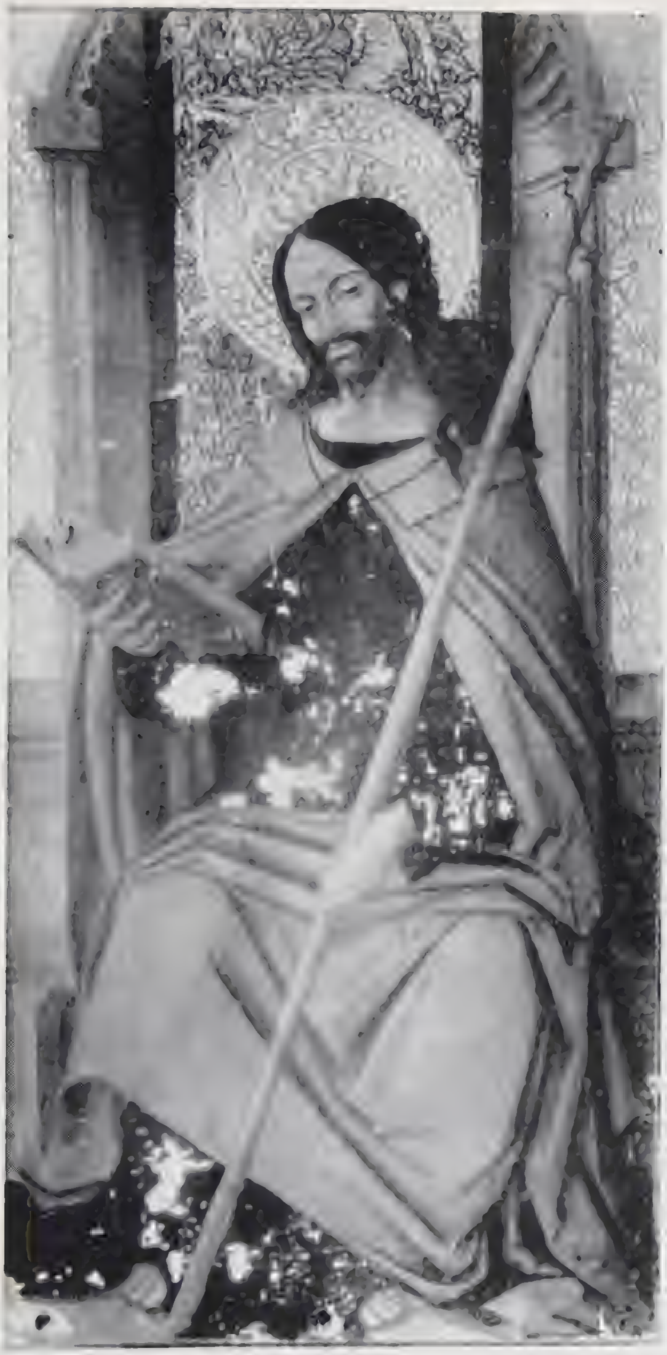

Fig. 25. JUAN GASCÓ. ST. JAMES MAJOR.
ORRIOLS COLLECTION, VICH
(*Photo. Mas*)

ing the bishop in the scene of the invention again embodied the type represented by the central St. Vincent from Torelló. In the compartment depicting the resurrection of the six persons, the rather mawkish upward glance of the spectator at the extreme right was an unpleasant touch obtruding in many of Juan Gascó's later works. The patterns in the gold backgrounds of the ordination and sermon were derived from ostentatious brocades, but in the other three instances he still maintained his old fondness for the *motif* of rosettes.

The Orriols Collection at Vich contains not only the documented St. Romanus by Juan Gascó but also other pieces both by Juan and his son Pedro. Their provenience is unknown or at least undivulged, nor can they be connected with any of the works the subjects of which the published documents describe. Of the two that the father surely executed, one must have been originally the central or a principal compartment of a retable, a representation of St. James Major enthroned as an object of cult (Fig. 25). The nearest analogue in style seems to me the altarpiece of 1513 for San Pedro de Vilamajor, and the throne of the Apostle, relieved against gold patterned with Juan's favorite floral circles, already is constructed of architecture of the Renaissance, covered by a semidome decorated with the *motif* of a shell, exactly as in the case of the St. Barbara of 1516 in the Vich Museum. The second of the panels in the Collection that internal evidence shows Juan certainly to have painted is a Crucifixion, once the pinnacle of a retable, that finds its closest counterpart, among his renderings of the theme, in the altarpiece of 1507 for the church of San Juan del Galí, although it possibly derives from the same original assemblage as the St. James. A third panel in the Collection, a fragment with the figure of St. Onuphrius, perhaps once a bit of a *guardapolvo*, cannot with quite such confidence be claimed for Juan Gascó, despite the fact that it exhibits a facial type that he often employs for old men. The Gothic lettering at the top of the panel should not be taken as evidence of an early date in the master's career, since he uses this alphabet as late as 1525 for the inscriptions accompanying the Prophets and Sibyls of his door in the cathedral of Vich, but the embossing of the halo's rings ought to be indicative of his beginnings in contrast to the flat treatment in the panels of St. James and the Crucifixion. The Holy Family by Pedro Gascó in the Orriols Collection will demand our attention in a subsequent chapter.

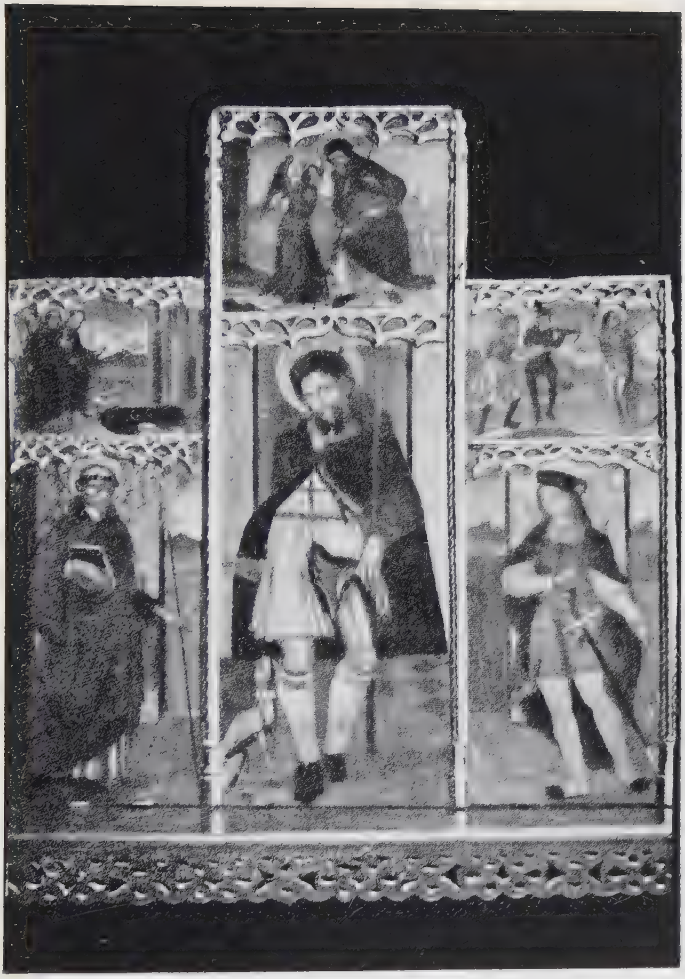

Fig. 26. JUAN GASCÓ. RETABLE. BUSTILLO COLLECTION, SEVILLE
(Courtesy of Dr. Martin S. Soria)

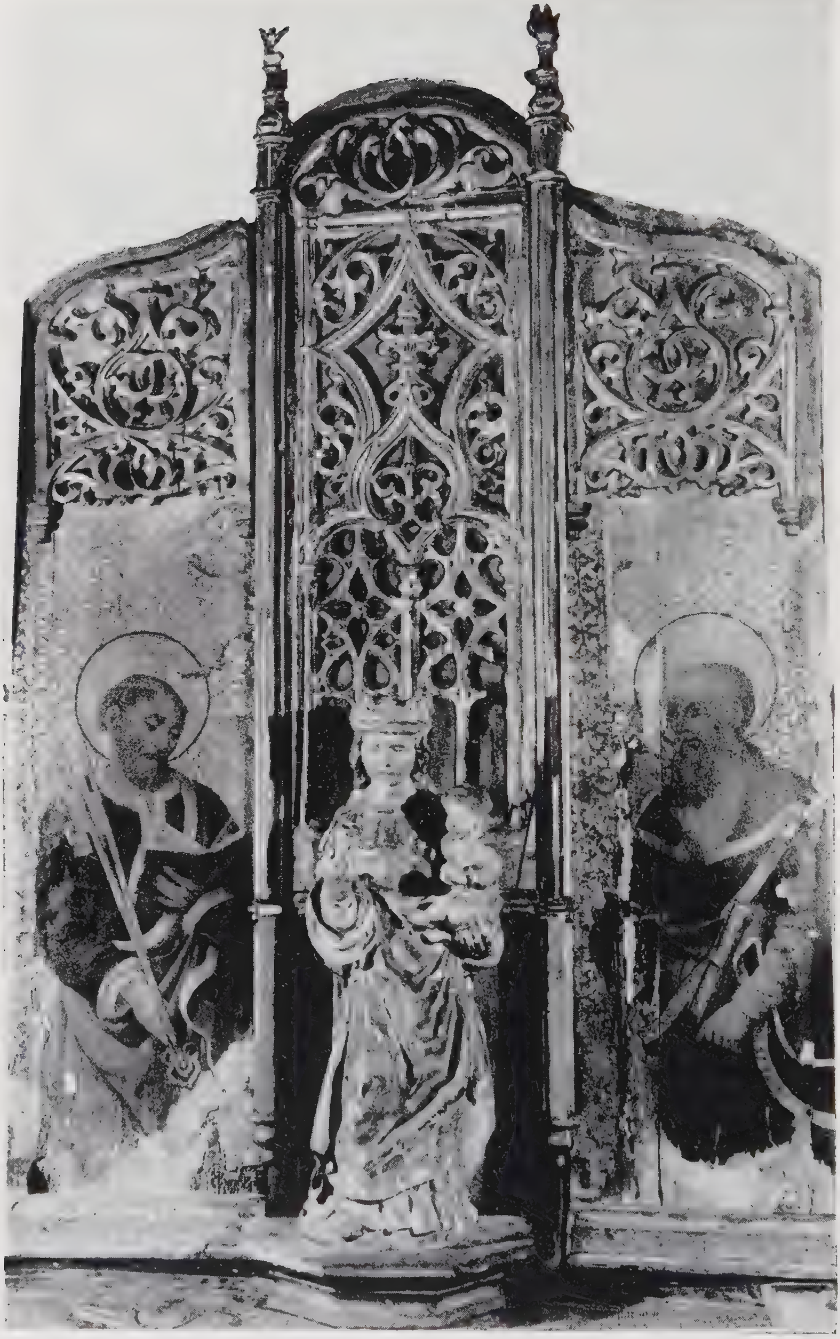

Fig. 27. JUAN GASCÓ(?). STS. PETER AND PAUL, WINGS OF A TRIPTYCH. FORMERLY IN THE COLLECTION OF MRS. FRANCISCA REYES, NEW YORK

It has become apparent that very few of Juan Gascó's works, perhaps by reason of his pleasant provincialism, have had sufficient general appeal to obtain purchasers or homes outside of the immediate region where he was active, and it thus proves somewhat of a surprise to find a whole retable by him (minus the predella) as far away as Seville, in the Collection of the Conde de Bustillo (Fig. 26). The central compartment is occupied by an effigy of St. Roch and the lateral divisions by figures of Sts. Benedict and Sebastian, all three standing against plaques of textiles; and the structure is completed with a narrative scene above each recipient of devotion relating an event from his life. The scene chosen for St. Roch is his succor by an angel during his attack of the plague, for St. Benedict, his resuscitation of the monk killed by the collapse of a wall of the rising monastery,[54] and for St. Sebastian, the ordeal of the arrows. Manifestly belonging to Juan Gascó's later manner, the retable finds the closest counterparts of its figures in the production transitional to this manner, the altarpiece of San Pedro de Vilamajor. The St. Sebastian is practically a replica of the mincing youth at the right in the Via Dolorosa of this altarpiece, and his pietistic upward glance is duplicated in the adolescent soldier beside the *eculeus* of St. Vincent in the retable from Torelló. The St. Roch, though he is conceived somewhat differently in the Vilamirosa retable, has a countenance often encountered in Gascó's achievements, as, at Vilamajor, in the first head at the right in the crucifixion of St. Peter and in the Christ of the Flagellation. At the sides of the textile behind St. Roch the gold is incised with one of the master's typical designs, consisting of lozenges ornamented with a floral pattern.

We can hardly refuse to discern Juan's hand in the wings of a triptych sold at Barcelona and last known to me as in the possession of Mrs. Francisca Reyes at New York (Fig. 27). The effigies of Sts. Peter and Paul, relieved at three-fourths length against a variation of his rosettes in the gold background, flank a shrine at the centre containing a statue of the Madonna which possibly but not surely belonged to the original monument. The St. Paul is not discordant with Gascó's standards, and the St. Peter repeats a type to which he frequently resorts, as in his representations of this Apostle

---

[54] St. Benedict anomalously wears in the retable a white cassock beneath his black robe, but he is identified by the inscription in the halo of his standing effigy and by the narrative episode.

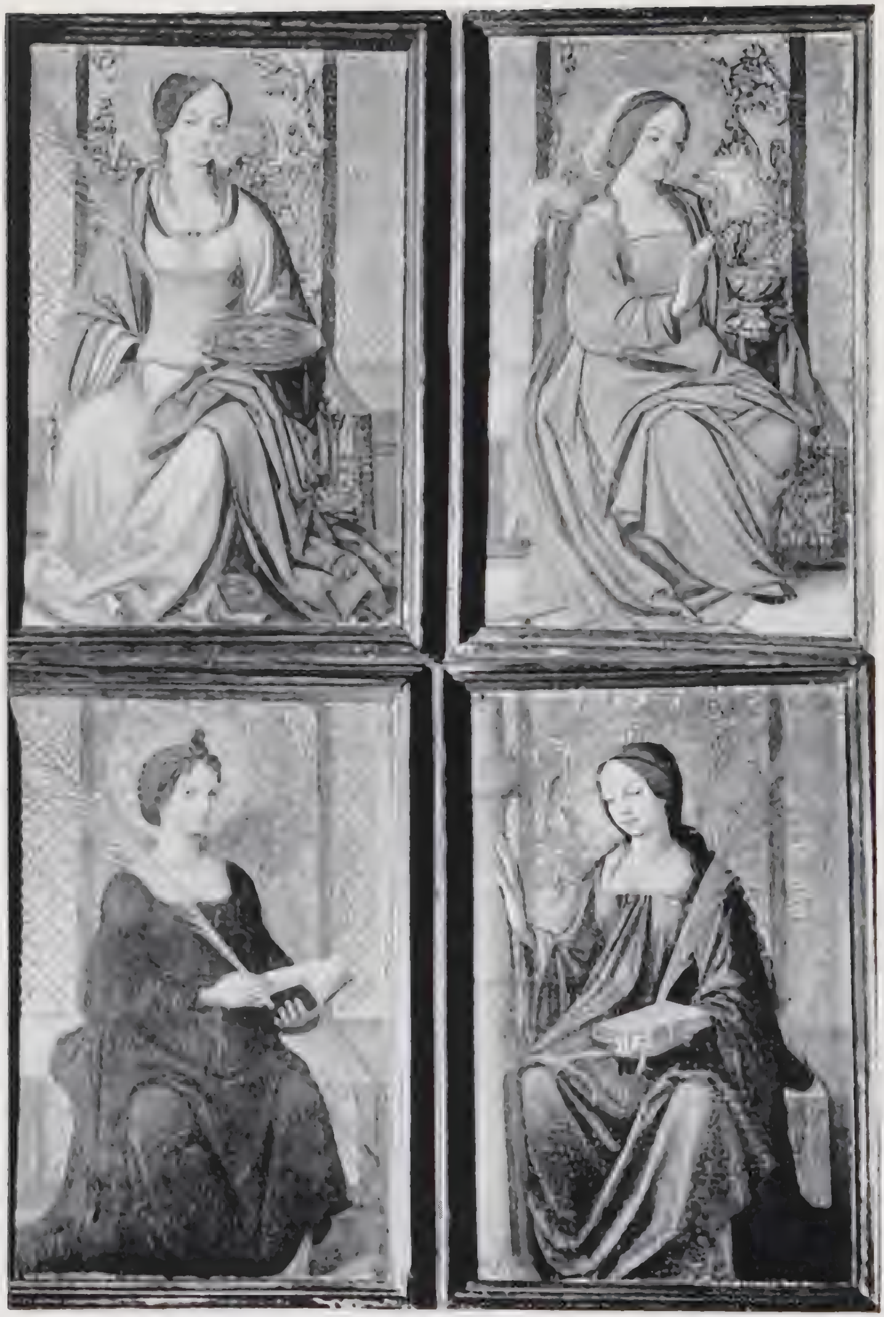

FIG. [illegible]. JUAN OR PEDRO GASCÓ. STS. LUCY, MARY MAGDALENE, QUITERIA, AND BARBARA. FORMERLY IN THE RÓMULO BOSCH COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

in the retable of San Julián de Vilamirosa and in the scene of the youth's resurrection at San Pedro de Vilamajor.

In the case of four small panels of enthroned feminine saints, Lucy, the Magdalene, Quiteria,[55] and Barbara, probably relics of a predella and formerly in the Collection of Rómulo Bosch at Barcelona (Fig. 28), Juan Gascó seems a more likely candidate for the authorship than his son Pedro, to whom they have sometimes been ascribed. In the scene of the miracle of resuscitation in the retable of San Pedro de Vilamajor, the empress's lady-in-waiting seen in full face is practically a replica of the St. Lucy; in the same retable a maiden viewing the Flagellation is very similar to the Magdalene; the canonized women in the predella at San Juan de las Abadesas fall within the same general types of humanity; and St. Quiteria's bangs are elaborated into exactly the topknot that we have seen on the head of the Sibyl at the left on the door in the Vich Museum. According to Juan's customary variation of the patterns in the gold backgrounds of single monuments, two different designs are employed within the range even of these four compartments.

The decision between the father and the son is more difficult when we study a panel of the levitation of the Magdalene (Fig. 29), originally perhaps the face of a tabernacle but at some later time made into the door of a cabinet, in the same church of San Juan del Galí for which Juan had painted the documented retable of the Baptist at the beginning of his career in Catalonia, but the balance is tipped in favor of the father by the virtual facial identity with the St. Barbara of the Bosch series. The mature style of the panel proves, of course, that it cannot belong to the Baptist's retable but must be a relic of some altarpiece of the Magdalene executed for the church at least as late as *c.* 1520. Although Juan Gascó, if he is indeed the author, still abides by a gold background and its rosettes, the old, rural master quite surprises us by the almost poignant delight in the feminine nude instilled into him by the spirit of the Renaissance.

[55] The emblem looks more like the fettered mad dog, which is one of her attributes, than the dragon of St. Margaret.

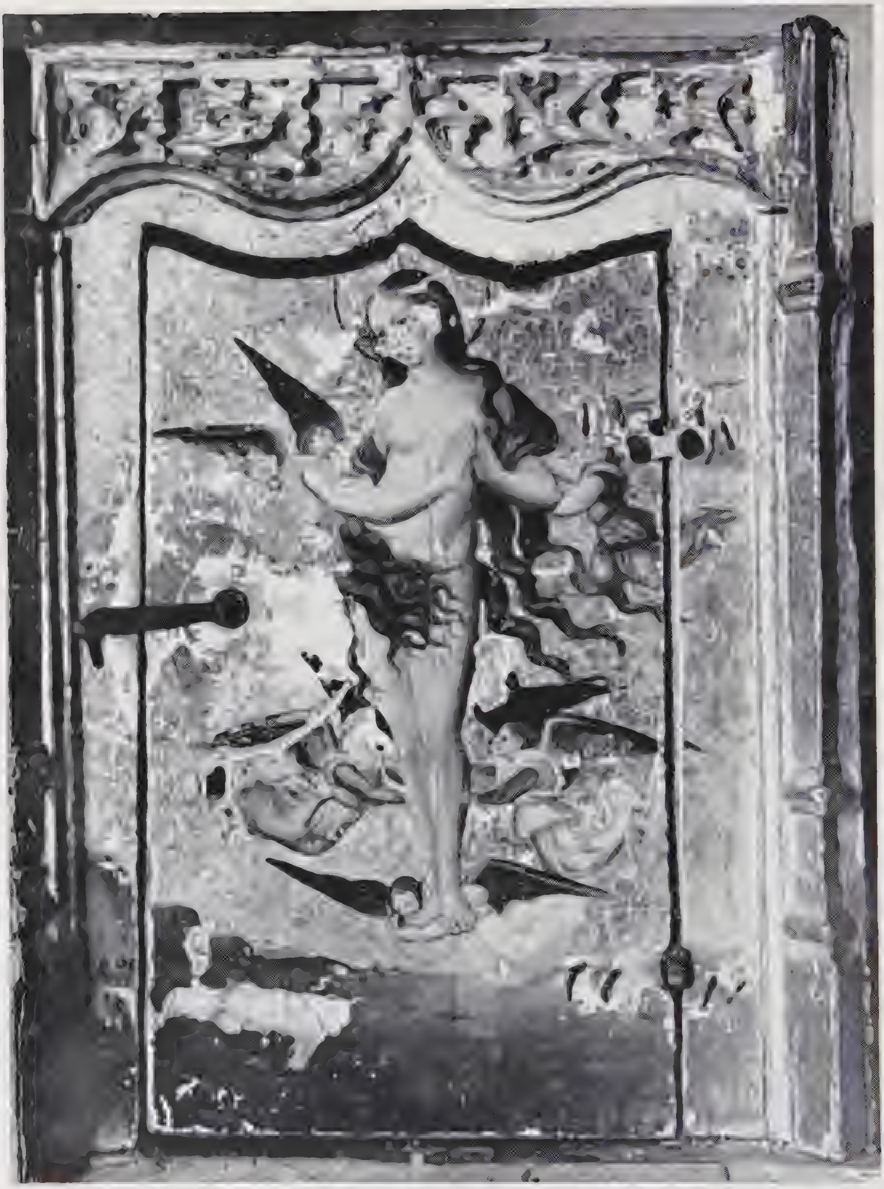

Fig. 29. JUAN OR PEDRO GASCÓ. LEVITATION OF THE MAGDALENE. PARISH CHURCH, SAN JUAN DEL GALÍ

(*Photo. Mas*)

CHAPTER III

PERRIS FONTAYNES

The acute perspicacity of the eminent historian of art, Juan Ainaud de Lasarte,[1] has elicited the actual name, Perris Fontaynes, of a talented stranger employed in Catalonia at the beginning of the sixteenth century, a Fleming or a Frenchman saturated in the modes of the Low Countries. In the documents[2] where he is mentioned the appellation occurs in slightly varied forms according to the fluid and careless spelling of the time, and in one instance his Christian name is set down as Pierre, suggesting even more definitely than Fontaynes French origin; but he might have come from the Gallic part of Belgium, which then included a section of what is now northern France. In order not to create confusion, I adopt the forms of both his names as chosen by Ainaud, who arrived at his identification in the following way. The tier of panels at the base of the retable over the high altar of the church of S. Félix at Gerona are obviously by a different and somewhat earlier hand than that of the St. Felix Master, the author of the paintings in the structure's main body.[3] The scholar of Gerona, Dr. Lamberto Font,[4] discovered on the book held by a Prophet, one of the sculptured figures on the retable, the inscription "Petrus F. obiit oz aprilis 1518" (the *oz* being interpreted by Ainaud as 12[5]), a sentence that indubitably registers the death of the earlier painter on the altarpiece. Moreover, we shall find on a later page that there is every reason for believing that it was immediately after this date when the St. Felix Master took hold and completed the enterprise. The interpretation of the F in the inscription recording the decease as the initial of Fontaynes receives considerable support from a monogram written on a page of a book in the hands of an angel, again one of the carved pieces of the structure. There is a huge P, the vertical stroke of which is prolonged above in lines to form an F; in the loop of the P the joined letters T and A seem plainly decipherable, accompanied by other characters that are less clear; and above the loop a line curves forth to make what appears to be an S, providing us with T-A-S as the presumptive end of the cognomen Fontaynes, for which F would constitute the beginning, whereas P would stand for the Christian name Perris. The F and the T-A-S must represent the cognomen Fontaynes, because in our copious records of the painters then active in Catalonia there is mention of no other Petrus whose second name would fit the letters. The proof culminates in the considerations that the style of the pertinent panels in the church of S. Félix is obviously that of an intruder from northern Europe such as the appellation Fontaynes shows the artist to have been, that in his contract of June 20, 1511, to do the (lost) shutters of the organ in the Dominican church, Barcelona, he is designated as dwelling at Gerona, and that, as passing judgment, April 21, 1515, on the works of Joan de Burgunya in the church of Sta. María del Pino, Barcelona, he would have been a friend of this painter who in all probability should be identified with the St. Felix Master.

---

[1] Unpublished article.

[2] See J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 82–85.

[3] See below, p. 78. The panels by Fontaynes are temporarily consigned to the Diocesan Museum, Gerona.

[4] *Gerona, la Catedral y el Museo Diocesano*, Gerona, 1952, pp. 76–77.

[5] Font (*op. cit.*) explains it rather as the second of April.

The left page of the book containing the monogram displays (with the customary abbreviations) a prayer for the artist's felicity in the after life, "Qui hoc depingebat semper cum Domino vivat," as if he were already dead, but such cannot have been the case, since the date March 11, 1518, in the same script is written in Catalan on the book held by another angel, "A XI de marts (*sic*) del any MDXVIII," and since, as we have noted, an inscription by another hand records that he did not die until April. The explanation may be that Fontaynes, feeling himself already very ill, tragically wished to perpetuate his memory with his monogram, the prayer, and the date in March.

The cycle at the bottom of the retable of St. Felix comprises: four scenes from the life of the Virgin, the Annunciation, Nativity of Christ (Fig. 30), Epiphany, and Assumption; two narrower compartments punctuating these scenes and depicting Sts. Michael and George, both overcoming the dragon; and in the middle of the tier four Prophets. The banderoles carried by David and Isaiah are inscribed with their names as well as with sentences from their writings, in the case of the former from Psalms, LXXII, 9, "Reges Tharsis et insulae munera (offerent)," and in the case of the latter from his book, LX, 14, "Et

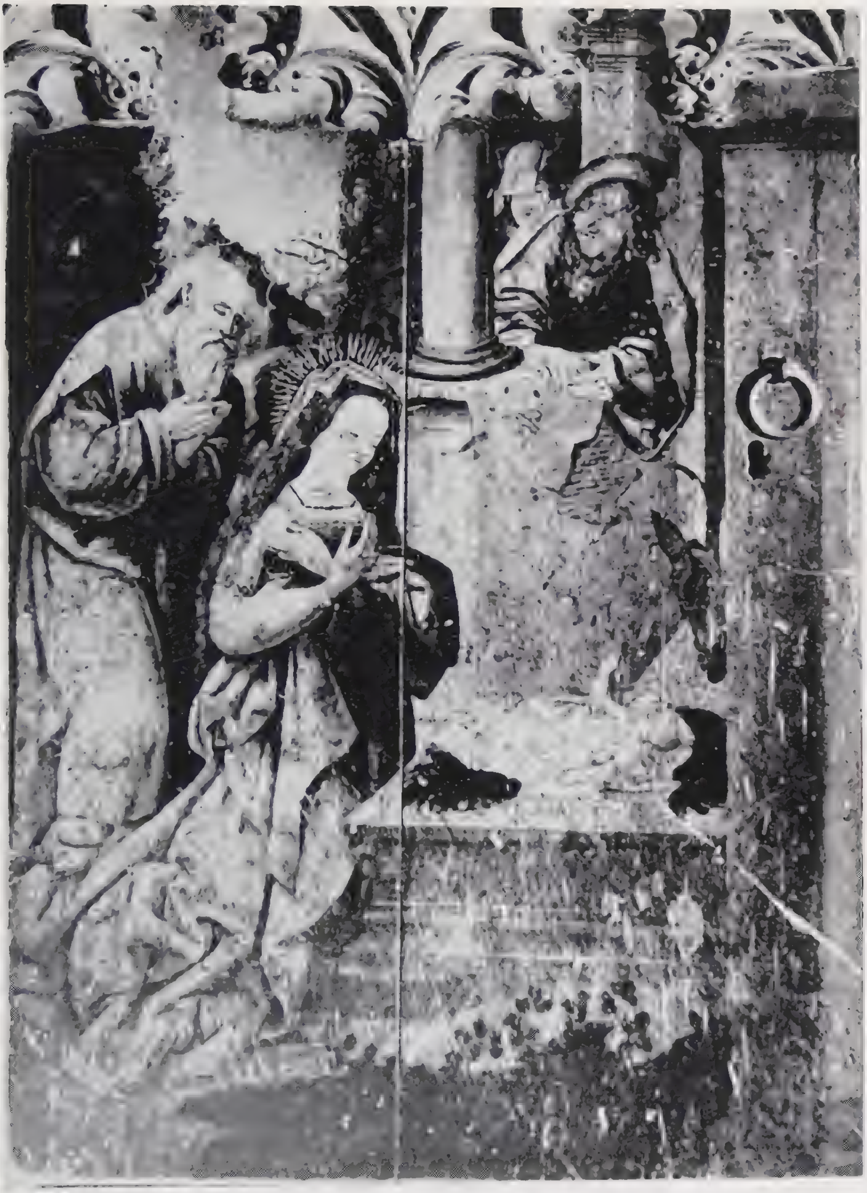

Fig. 30. PERRIS FONTAYNES. NATIVITY. SECTION OF RETABLE OF ST. FELIX. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

adorabunt vestigia pedum tuorum." The other two Prophets are not denominated on their scrolls, but Daniel is identified by an adaptation from his book, II, 34 and 45, "Lapis angularis sine manibus abscissus est" (with the order of words in the Vulgate changed and with the adjective *angularis* added to make the stone of the original into a corner stone as a symbol of Christ). Although the fourth figure cannot be Isaiah, who is already included in the assembly, his inscription, according to a not unparalleled transfer of verses from one Prophet to another,[6] is constituted by the familiar message of Isaiah, IX, 6, "Parvulus natus est nobis, et filius datus est."

The competent style is an eclectic product of the general condition of Flemish painting in the dawning Renaissance rather than dependent upon any single master of the Low Countries, except possibly to a certain degree Quentin Matsys, but some of the racial types are perhaps partially Hispanicized. In distinction from the haloes of rays in the episodes of the life of the Virgin, Sts. George and Michael display the sort that is like a gold plaque, but the rest of the internal evidence implies that they too were executed by the painter of the other sections. Angulo[7] has perceived that the cartoon of the Epiphany and the Virgin in the Nativity are derived from Schongauer's treatments of the themes, Bartsch nos. 6 and 5.

Under the number 1273 there exists in the Museum of Vich a small[8] panel of the Nativity, decidedly Flemish in character and for which a tempting but by no means conclusive argument can be put up in favor of an attribution to Perris Fontaynes (Fig. 31). Since it comes from the great monastery of San Juan de las Abadesas, the escutcheon of this institution is twice imposed upon the bottom of the picture. The monastery at this time belonged to Augustinian canons, and it may well be that one of these was the donor who, still in diminished size according to a mediaeval practice, kneels in a canon's robes at the left.

The most copious grounds for the attribution are afforded by a comparison of the renderings of the Nativity at Gerona and Vich. The first thing that strikes us is that St. Joseph is nearly the same personage in both pictures. Moreover, the halo that he wears in the Gerona version is only a simplification of the very peculiar treatment of the

---

[6] Vol. VIII, p. 96, n. 2.

[7] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 359.

[8] The dimensions are 57 ½ centimetres in height by 45 in width.

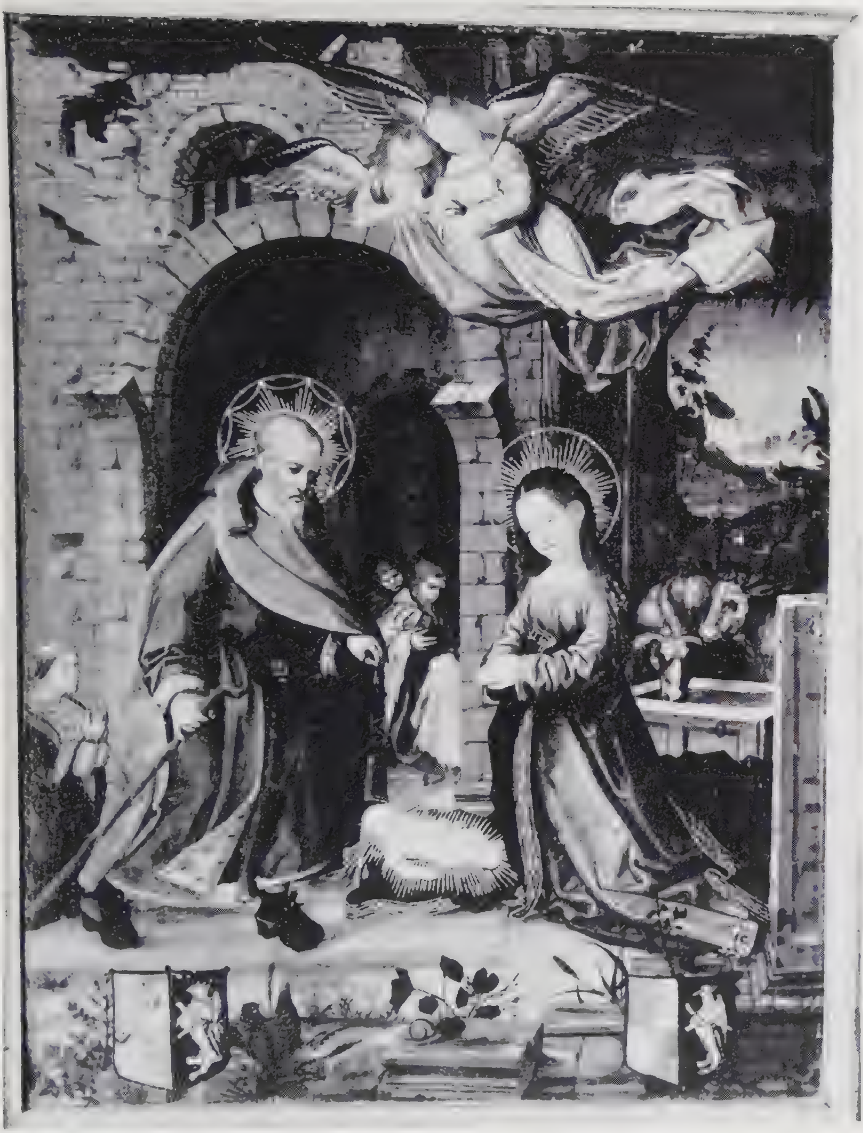

FIG. 51. PERRIS FONTAYNES (?). NATIVITY. MUSEUM, VICH
(Photo. Serra)

polygonal nimbus belonging to worthies of the old dispensation that distinguishes him in the Vich panel: in each instance its sides are scalloped and consist merely of gold lines, although at Vich it is enclosed in a circle. The Virgin in the Gerona Nativity, as well as in the Epiphany, if relieved of her headdress, would look much more like the delicate creature that the Vich picture makes her to be. The mood of dreamy mysticism that is spread over all the participants in the Vich rendering of the Birth of Christ may be observed also at Gerona, for instance especially in the older standing Magus and the St. George. The abundant draperies of Our Lady in both Nativities flow down and forth in analogous Flemish folds, in the Gerona version derived, as to a certain extent the whole figure, from the smaller of Schongauer's two engravings of the theme. More obviously than to Mary in the Gerona Nativity, the Vich Madonna is comparable to the Virgin in the Gerona Annunciation but particularly to Gabriel, since they have no headcloths. The Child in both treatments of His Birth is the same lusty and alert little urchin. Flowering plants so frequently are seen in the foregrounds of religious paintings in the Middle Ages and Renaissance that not much stress can be laid upon their appearance in the Gerona version as well as at Vich, but some weight attaches to the fact that an ancient stele is included at the right edge of the setting of each Nativity, in the case of the Vich panel with its top broken away so that it embodies the sentiment of the Renaissance for ruins.[9] Other resemblances could be adduced, such as the like desire for *sfumatezza* in the angels of the Gerona Assumption and those of the Vich panel, but enough evidence has been itemized to make us reckon with at least the possibility that the creator of the panel was Fontaynes. Since at this time the activity of a painter was still likely to be distributed through a province or diocese, we can add to the count the point that San Juan de las Abadesas, the source of the Vich panel, lies within the province of Gerona.

Whether or not Fontaynes did the Vich Nativity, I am disposed to believe, though without dogmatism, that its author deserves the credit for a fairly large[10] Visitation, a part of the Scheufelen bequest to the Gallery at Stuttgart (Fig. 32). I have not arrived at the decision to include the picture at this place in my volumes without

---

[9] A keyhole and handle were introduced at some subsequent time into the stele in the Gerona panel, showing that the picture was barbarously made to function as a door.

[10] The measurements are 113 centimetres in height by 85 in width.

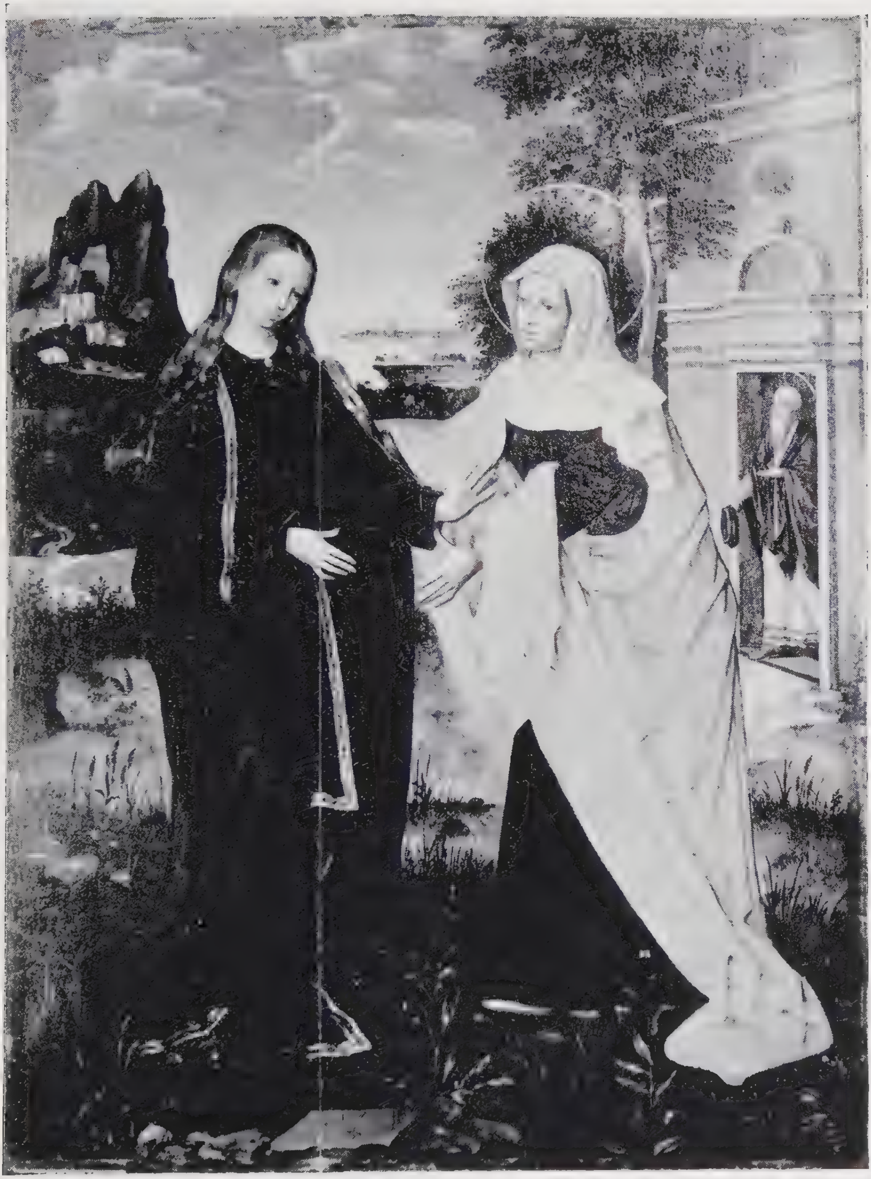

Fig. 32. PERRIS FONTAYNES (?). VISITATION.
GALLERY, STUTTGART

having laboriously weighed the claims of other Spanish schools and without having at times been tempted by them, nor have I neglected the possibilities of other artists active in Catalonia, especially the urgent demands of the Canapost Master for consideration. The likeness of the ethereal St. Elizabeth to the separate effigy of St. Bernard in the retable of Canapost is very arresting, and the panel of the Trinity in St. Jacques, Perpignan,[11] has revealed that the Canapost Master was a man of broader scope than we had suspected; but no discovered work justifies the opinion that he adopted the ways of the Renaissance which the Visitation exhibits, and the evidence for an attribution to the author of the Vich Nativity is more abundant and persuasive. Both pictures seem patently to belong to the Flemish or Franco-Flemish strain in the painting of Catalonia at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Virgin's countenance and coiffure scarcely differ in the Nativity and Visitation, and in the gold edging of her garment the *motifs* between the twin lines are somewhat similar. The Zacharias emerging through a doorway in the background of the Visitation is not too unlike the St. Joseph of the Nativity, but (if we are willing to assign the latter panel to Fontaynes) he resembles more closely the foster-father of Christ in the Gerona representation of the Birth of Our Lord and in the Epiphany. The St. George in the Gerona cycle, moreover, provides almost, if not quite, as exact an analogue for St. Elizabeth's face as the Canapost Master's St. Bernard. If you would take the unusually large circle of St. Elizabeth's halo and set within it the rays of the Virgin's nimbus, you would get the halo distinguishing Mary in the Nativity.

The vista seen at one side in the Vich panel is only a small counterpart of the extremely deep and beautiful landscape spreading forth in the setting of the Stuttgart painting — at the left majestic, towering rocks, punctuated by a picturesque castle, as in the works of the Master of the Scala Salutis and the Master of the Four Saints, and at the right a spacious view of the sea and its shores, with an extraordinary realization of aërial perspective and in rivalry with the marine backgrounds that the St. Felix Master sometimes essays. One of the rocks forms a natural bridge through which there brilliantly and eerily penetrates the light, made to seem the brighter by contrast with a little figure that the artist has knowingly introduced into its midst; and a finely delineated group of travellers also in diminished scale flashes forth in a patch of illumination amidst the fanciful chiaroscuro of the whole rocky mass. As in other instances of troublesome attributions subordinate details may swing the pendulum towards a solution, so the likelihood that the Visitation and Nativity were executed by a single person is increased by the pronounced similarity in the foregrounds. Not only are we led into the pictures by growths that show an actual scientific interest in botany, but amongst the plants in the Visitation there conspicuously lies a large stone, a relic of some demolished building, to match several such pieces strewn in the vegetation of the Nativity's foremost plane.

---

[11] See below, p. 673.

CHAPTER IV

THE ST. FELIX MASTER (JOAN DE BURGUNYA?)

1. His Identity

Neither I nor anyone else can entertain any substantial doubt that the great Catalan scholar, Juan Ainaud de Lasarte,[1] by brilliant reasoning and deduction has arrived at the truth in believing Joan de Burgunya[2] the real name of the distinguished painter of the early Renaissance who is the subject of the present chapter; but perhaps with excessive punctiliousness I prefer to err on the side of caution and keep for him the sobriquet, the St. Felix Master, waiting for a document or signature to reveal with absolute surety that he did one of the works attributable to this Master on stylistic grounds. I take the sobriquet from his most conspicuous extant production, the scenes from the life of St. Felix that form the main body of the retable over the high altar of the church of S. Félix at Gerona, the base of which we have found[3] to be the achievement of Perris Fontaynes.

We must first dismiss Angulo's[4] earlier attempt to arrive at his actual name. His guess that the monogram on the book of a sculptured angel in the retable in S. Félix enshrines the cognomen Porta collapses with the discovery that it stands for Perris Fontaynes.[5] He took the P as the initial of the surname, though it really begins the Christian name, and combined it with the T A, which we now know to be a part of Fontaynes, so as to form, with the undecipherable letters, Porta. The F he thought might perhaps be the initial of *Fecit*. A deterrent to such an interpretation of the monogram was, from the beginning, the consideration that, so far as I am informed, no painter with this appellation emerges in our records, despite their fullness, of indigenous or even immigrant artists of the period in Catalonia; but, since it is quite possible that one of the St. Felix

---

[1] Unpublished article.

[2] Although for the sake of uniformity throughout my volumes I usually translate Catalan names into Castilian, I am compelled to keep the Catalan form Joan de Burgunya in order to distinguish him from the master active in Castile, Juan de Borgoña.

[3] P. 69.

[4] In his article on the artist in *Archivo español de arte,* XVII (1944), 359.

[5] See above, p. 69.

Master's retables in a church at Valencia was done originally for this city,[6] Angulo found some significance attaching to the existence of a Valencian dynasty of painters with the surname Porta who may be traced from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century.[7] No Valencian painter so styled, however, is known to have lived at the time of the St. Felix Master's activity, the first half of the sixteenth century; but a late member of the dynasty towards the end of the Cinquecento, Miguel Juan Porta, was a native of Ager in northwestern Catalonia,[8] with the corollary that his predecessors may also have had Catalan affiliations. Angulo would like to believe that the author of the St. Felix retable was trained in the school of Valencia, but I fail to discern any sure marks of such an education. Subsequently I shall adduce analogies to the manner of the Master's Valencian contemporary, Vicente Juan Masip, the father of Juan de Juanes, but the painters are too nearly synchronous for either to have had much of a part in the formation of the other, although at some period in their lives and at some place one may have admired the other's achievements.

We shall eventually deprecate the idea that the St. Felix Master could be the same person as the artist Juan Petit.

The ingenious logic on which Ainaud bases his equalization of Joan de Burgunya with the St. Felix Master consists largely in a discernment of a correspondence between the places where the latter's works exist and the knowledge of the former's peregrinations that we gain from the documents.[9] Joan states in his will of March 13, 1523, that, born at Strassburg (which, as an imperial free city on the edge of Maximilian's Burgundian estates, would allow an artist from the place to be called John of Burgundy), he contracted matrimony at Orihuela in Valencian territory, and much later in life, at the end of the year 1521, when he had long since been established at Barcelona, he gave a power of attorney to a citizen of Orihuela to collect debts still owed to him in this town. Thus residing south of Valencia at a presumably somewhat youthful age, he is supposed by Ainaud to have executed for the church of Nuestra Señora del Milagro in this city an extant retable of St. Andrew, which is most assuredly a work of the St. Felix Master and which the Catalan scholar thinks to have been done originally for the church, rather than presented to the edifice by a donor after having been made for an institution in another town,[10] and judges to be an early achievement of Joan de Burgunya.[11] His connection with Valencia is further substantiated by the fact that in the problems which arose in regard to his labor on the (lost) retable of the high altar of Sta. María del Pino, Barcelona, one of the experts who gave judgment on April 21, 1515, was no less a person than the Valencian artist Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina,[12] and that Valencian elements are perhaps to be detected in the style of the St. Felix Master. The St. Felix Master has also left us a retable of the Magdalene in the Provincial Museum, Tarragona, deriving from a monastery in the province,[13] and Tarragona, lying between Valencia and Barcelona, might have enjoyed a temporary sojourn of Joan de Burgunya on his way north, or the retable might have been done after he was already living at Barcelona when the memory of the honor of his visit to Tarragona was so fresh in the citizens' minds that a work from him was ordered for their region. Indeed we have notice that on December 21, 1510, a prominent member by this time of the artistic circle of Barcelona, he was involved in a legal suit against Nicolás de Credensa in regard to their respective shares in the payment for a retable which they were doing for the monastery of Santas Creus in the province of Tarragona, Joan responsible for the painting and Nicolás for the gilding. The most cogent arguments, however, for the identification of Joan with the St. Felix Master have to do with the latter's retable in the church of S. Félix, Gerona, and the former's eventual residence in this city. An acquaintance with Perris Fontaynes, who did the lower part of the retable, is shown by this painter's service, together with Fernando Yáñez, in giving an expert opinion on Joan's contributions to the altarpiece of Sta. María del Pino, Barcelona, but more concretely significant is the knowledge that, after the death of Fontaynes in the spring of 1518, Joan is found on December 12, 1519, to be dwelling in Gerona and receiving compensation for some product of his profession in the town. The document[14] telling us of his presence at Gerona states that he had recently arrived, accompanied by eight persons, some of them doubtless members of his family but including probably also a group of assistants; and his widow's legal action, on March 3, 1527, to obtain funds owed to him at Gerona confirms his employment in the city, where, moreover, we shall find further works by the St. Felix Master. The death of Joan de Burgunya must have occurred shortly before December 3, 1525, when in the contract of Pedro Nunyes to complete the retable of Sta. María del Pino he is described as no longer in the land of the living. To Ainaud's elaborate and persuasive web of evidence for the identification of Joan with the St. Felix Master, I myself should wish to add the scarcely deniable influence upon the latter of Michael Pacher, who, though active farther south in Teutonic territory, could easily have come within the travels of a young student of the arts from Strassburg towards the end of the Quattrocento. Whimsically formed letters are simulated as woven into borders of garments here and there in the paintings of the retable of St. Felix, but I can elicit from them no sure meaning or reference to a Joan de Burgunya.

---

[6] See below, p. 94.

[7] They may most readily be found in the Thieme-Becker *Lexikon.*

[8] See L. Tramoyeres Blasco in *Revista de la Asociación Artísticoarqueológica Barcelonesa,* IV (1903–1905), 721–730.

[9] J. Mas in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras* (Barcelona), VI (1911–1912), 311. J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*: I, 3 (1943), 48–50, 69–70, 80–88; II, 1 (1944), 7–11; II, 2 (1944), 36–37, 40; VI, 3–4 (1948), 351, 361, 364; and in the Portuguese periodical, *Museu,* VI (1950), 134 and 146. Cf. also: J. Ainaud de Lasarte and F. P. Verrié in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 1 (1941), 44; my vol. IX, p. 176; and Ainaud's very important article to which I have referred at the beginning of the present chapter.

---

[10] See below, p. 94.

[11] But see below, p. 86.

[12] See my vol. XI, p. 185.

[13] See below, p. 100.

2. His Works

The lion's share in the retable of St. Felix went to the St. Felix Master, the six great panels from the martyr's story, with the figures almost as large as life, at the sides of the sculptured Madonna and her shrine which occupy the middle of the structure. There were two saints of the name honored at Gerona, and the subjects depicted seem to prove that the one here intended was the martyr who, commemorated on August 1 and, according to tradition, a brother of St. Cucufas,[15] came to Catalonia from Africa and who, usually considered to have been a layman, is often so represented; [16] but in the altarpiece that now concerns us he is made into a deacon through a not uncommon confusion [17] with the other St. Felix of Gerona, a companion of the bishop, St. Narcissus,[18] and also a martyr, who, however, is not recorded to have gone through the series of tortures related of his homonym and whose day is March 18. The confusion is perhaps further illustrated by the facts that St. Narcissus is highly honored in the church of S. Félix, possessing there indeed a special chapel, and that in the sculpture of the retable large statues of a hallowed deacon and bishop, i.e., Sts. Felix and Narcissus, counterbalance each other, whereas the layman St. Felix is not reported to have had such an episcopal associate; but it is possible that the deacon's statue was really meant to represent the companion of St. Narcissus and that only the painted panels were devoted to the martyr from Africa. We can scarcely postulate, instead, that the companion of St. Narcissus absorbed in the paintings the story of the martyr ordinarily conceived as a layman, for the inscription on the sarcophagus, once existing in the church, of the Felix to whom the edifice is dedicated described him as an African,[19] whereas the deacon is generally declared to have been a native of Gerona.

---

[14] The recording of this document for the first time is one of the many additions to our understanding of the Catalan Cinquecento comprised in Ainaud's article.

[15] Vol. V, pp. 84 ff.

[16] See my vols. VII, p. 831, and VIII, p. 411.

The six scenes by our Master depict St. Felix [20] sermonizing (Fig. 33), arraigned before Rufinus, dragged by mules, visited in prison by angels while his persecutor plans still further cruelties, cast into the sea weighted with a millstone but rescued by his angelic protectors (both of these marine episodes telescoped in a single panel), and finally torn with rakes on the *eculeus* (Fig. 34). In small scale in the background of the last compartment a martyr is being beaten

---

[17] See the Bollandists under the feast of the layman St. Felix, August 1. C. Sarthou Carreres (*Datos para la historia de Játiva*, Játiva, 1933, I, 35–36) shows that the St. Felix of Gerona, honored on August 1, was considered at Játiva to be a deacon. He is thus depicted in a retable of Juan de Leví's shop at Uncastillo: see my vol. IX, p. 776. Fortiá Solá (*Historia de Torelló*, Barcelona, II, 1948, p. 22), not realizing the confusion between the two saints of Gerona named Felix, interprets the use of the dalmatic for the hallowed layman as a relic of the time when the garment was merely secular, but by the period of the Spanish paintings dealing with him it could have signified only the diaconate.

[18] See my vol. VI, p. 242.

[19] See an article by E. González Hurtebise in *Revista de la Asociación Artístico-arqueológica Barcelonesa*, IV (1903–1905), 836.

[20] Angulo (*op. cit.*) at first wrongly saw in the panels the life of St. Vincent, whose story is similar, but he afterward corrected himself (*Pintura del Renacimiento*, vol. XII in the series *Ars Hispaniae*, Madrid, 1954, p. 58). All the events depicted are related of St. Felix, and the dragging by mules and the rescue of a martyr from the water while still alive do not belong among St. Vincent's experiences. It would, moreover, be anomalous to ornament the high altar of a church dedicated to St. Felix with episodes from the tale of another canonized youth.

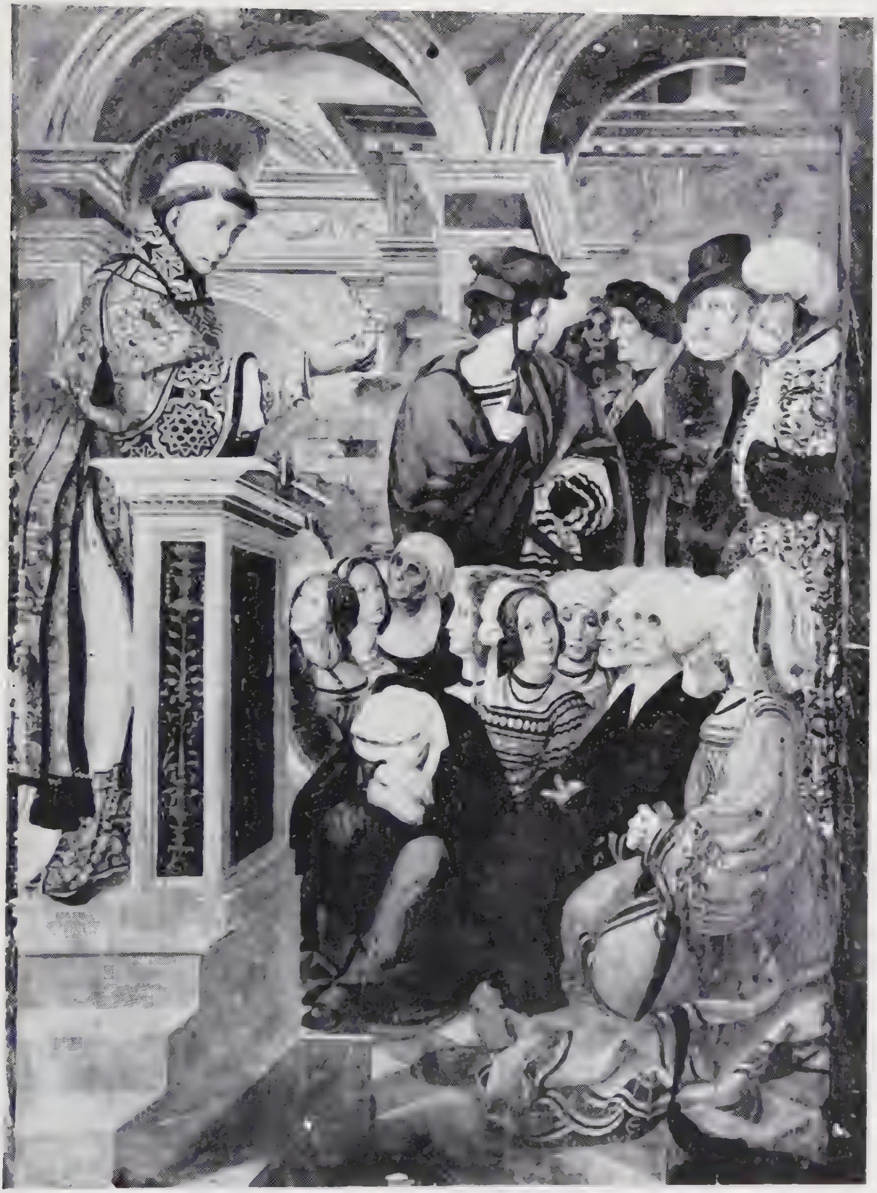

Fig. 33. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. ST. FELIX PREACHING,
SECTION OF RETABLE. S. FÉLIX, GERONA
(Photo. Mas)

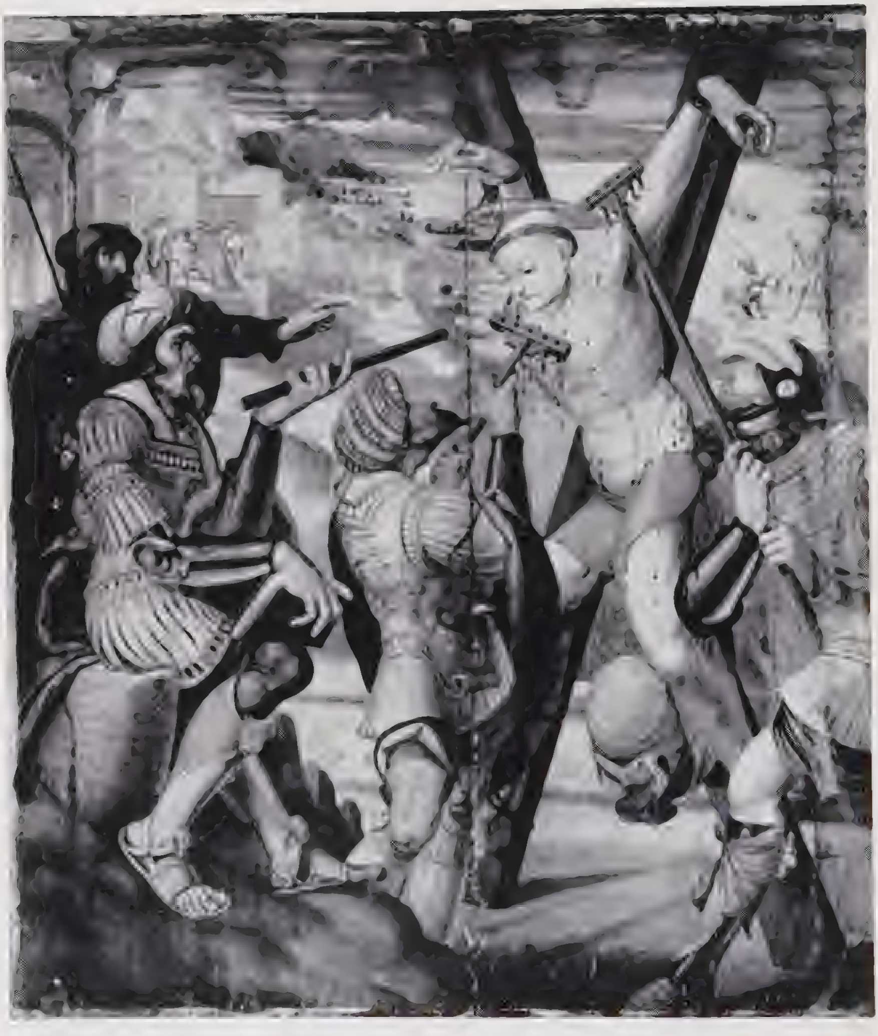

FIG. 34. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. TORTURE OF ST. FELIX ON THE *ECULEUS*, SECTION OF RETABLE. S. FÉLIX, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

with rods and then raised on the *eculeus*, possibly Felix, but, since in the cudgelling he is vested in a cope, perhaps, again with confusion of the two stories, Narcissus. Beneath the upper register that we have just described, a kind of large sculptured predella, in the ordonnance of the retable before the civil war, was constituted by figures of Christ and the Apostles, and under this there stretched a base made up of paintings, chiefly from the life of the Virgin, by Perris Fontaynes; [21] but because of the partial injuries suffered by the retable in the war at least the majority of its carved sections have now been removed to the Diocesan Museum, Gerona.

The fundamental fact about the St. Felix Master's art appears to be that he absorbed a German style like that of Michael Pacher (thus strongly implying, as we have seen, his identity with Joan de Burgunya) and that he carried it farther into the modes of the Renaissance. The affinities with Pacher are very tangible. Not only are the concern with the perspective of architecture, the nature of the landscapes, the manipulation of chiaroscuro, and even to some extent the human types similar, but it is hard to escape the conviction that he remembered some of Pacher's compositions. In the altarpiece at St. Wolfgang on the Abersee the scene of St. Wolfgang delivering a sermon despite demoniacal interruption by noise seems very definitely to have served as the model for the compartment of St. Felix's homily; and in Pacher's same altarpiece the aggregation of persons at the left in the Raising of Lazarus must almost surely have been in our painter's mind when he depicted the line of St. Andrew and the spectators in the Apostle's exorcism of the devilish dogs in the retable at Valencia. It is to be observed also that in this Valencian picture the architectural setting translates into the vocabulary of the Renaissance the background of the episode of St. Wolfgang forcing Satan to hold the missal for him on the outside of one of the wings of Pacher's altarpiece of the Fathers of the Church now in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich. The St. Felix Master even preserves at times the contorted violence of posture occasionally cropping out in Pacher's productions. Whether he followed Pacher's example and went to Italy, thus increasing his familiarity with the Renaissance, or whether he derived his Italianism from its spread to Spain and the rest of Europe, there are no means of determining. If he had the benefit of a period of residence in Italy, Florence at the opening of the

---

[21] See above, p. 69.

Cinquecento would be the most likely spot for his studies, in the neighborhood of Granacci or particularly Ridolfo Ghirlandaio. In the background in the scene of the carding of St. Felix upon the *eculeus* there may be descried what were perhaps meant as the Colosseum and the buildings on the Palatine Hill, but, since he could have known these views in reproductions, they cannot be taken as indicative of an Italian sojourn.

With our scant, present information about another German painter, Anye Bru, whose employment in Catalonia is certified from 1504 to 1507,[22] I find it difficult to follow Angulo and Ainaud in discerning any vital effect of his works upon the St. Felix Master, nor do I think it possible that he should have been the channel by which our Master received Pacher's influence. Angulo seems to be right in claiming that in the compartment of St. Andrew's flagellation, a section of the Valencian retable now in a private collection at Barcelona, the figure of the Apostle was suggested by the St. Cucufas undergoing martyrdom in the panel of the Barcelona Museum that remains to us from Anye Bru's retable in the church of San Cugat del Vallés; but the taking of an idea from Bru means no more than the purloining of a few passages from Dürer's prints that it will eventually be our duty to notice in the St. Felix Master, and I fail to descry any such real *stylistic* affiliation between the two artists as between our Master and Pacher. It is conceivable that, if we knew more of Bru's craft than the pitifully small vestiges of the retable of San Cugat teach us, we should discover more relationships with the St. Felix Master, but I am sure that the relationships would turn out to be only casual since the two preserved sections of the retable embody a ponderous style different from the essential manner not only of Pacher but also of our painter. If Angulo correctly sees a connection between the panels of the martyrdom of St. Cucufas and of St. Andrew's flagellation in the Valencian altarpiece, Ainaud's chronology would perhaps be partially upset, for we should have to predicate that the St. Felix Master had already been in the region of Barcelona before his experiences in the old kingdom of Valencia.

Of any contact with French art, he has left us no tokens.

As I have said,[23] I find it hard to detect any unimpeachable evidence of a Valencian training. My eyes fail to descry sure traces of the influence of Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina who may have been one of his friends and who is singled out by Ainaud as contributing to his formation. The resemblances to the attainments of Vicente Juan Masip are more tangible, but I have already had occasion to doubt whether such a possible contact meant much to the St. Felix Master.

---

[22] Vol. IX, p. 848.

[23] See above, p. 79.

His modes are rather surprisingly similar to those of his contemporary in Castile, Juan de Borgoña, but with a more definite manneristic trend than Juan attained even at the end of his days and with an apparently Germanic foundation that is lacking in the other painter. When the St. Felix Master uses serene, generalized types, they are not very different from those of his rival, though he punctuates them more frequently with incisively characterized individuals; the two artists' proportions for the human body are analogous; and both exhibit an intense concern with problems of architectural setting. We have seen in volume IX [24] that Juan de Borgoña must not be identified with Joan de Burgunya; and we cannot even guess whether the St. Felix Master at some place had enjoyed contact with Juan de Borgoña, thus moving farther than Pacher into the temper of the Renaissance, or whether independently he arrived at a somewhat analogous style, imbuing it with more of the tendencies of nascent mannerism.

Whatever his primary sources, it cannot be doubted that he modified them by familiarity with the Antwerp mannerists, whether through an actual visit to the Low Countries or merely through an admiration for the many examples of this phase of Flemish art imported into Spain. Beside his figures of a placid, idealized beauty, he is prone to introduce the haggard types cultivated in the school of Antwerp, as in all the actors in the scene of the punishment upon the *eculeus*. The soldier at the right who rakes the martyr's body is one of several instances of the twisted, disjointed, jerky postures for which the Antwerp mannerists provided him with models. The landscape in this compartment is similar to the ones that Alejo Fernández at Marchena derived from the same kind of Flemish precedent. It was probably from the Antwerp mannerists that the St. Felix Master likewise learned so perceptible a tendency to *sfumatezza* in certain of his countenances that it is one of the Morellian traits by which his brush may be recognized. He resorts to it particularly, though not solely, in girls' faces, and, since the faces are often rather fleshy, there results a curious resemblance to some of the heads painted by Romanino. Examples are the two maidens at the extreme left in the congregation to whom St. Felix preaches and several of the angels who visit him in prison and lift him from the waves.

---

[24] P. 176.

We are in the presence of no mere provincial but of an artist of considerable stature. Although not an exciting composer, he is a very competent draughtsman. Except in the various representations of St. Felix and a few of the women who listen to the martyr's exhortation, he is not satisfied with tranquil, generalized types like those of Juan de Borgoña, but he powerfully characterizes the majority of his persons — for instance, all four of the prominent men in St. Felix's audience, the Moor, the corpulent figure (in an oddly modern hat) who is a kind of Falstaff appearing often in the Master's pictures, the profile who looks like a portrait of Dante, and the youth who might almost have been painted by Franciabigio. The same sort of fat man as in the audience can be seen in the rôle of one of Rufinus's councillors in the arraignment and of the jailer in the compartment of the angels' visit to the prison, and both of these panels contain further trenchant individualizations. In this respect he continues and heightens the distinction of the mediaeval Catalan school in the forceful picking out and differentiation of heads.

Although in his panels he is fond of a tonality strangely like that of Raphael's frescoes, he even retains much of the old affection of the Catalan school for brilliant decorative effects of gold, employing them still in the vestments and even in the architecture and the pavement, as in the scene of the arraignment. In general he aims at impressions of monumental magnificence, making the most of the sumptuous costumes of the age of Charles V and appreciating the resplendent value of stripes in fabrics. Outstanding examples are two of the women and the prominent youth in St. Felix's congregation. Angulo has stressed particularly his addiction to stuffs of Moorish nature. Like Melozzo and Raphael he enhances monumentality by settings of grandiose architecture. With his love of the gorgeous, he follows Melozzo in an addiction to opulently adorned edifices rather than to Raphael's more classical buildings, and in the materials of his structures he cultivates polychromy. By reason of his interest in architecture and in problems of perspective, he is prone in his edifices to depict a series of planes, one behind the other. In the compartment of the preaching, he simulates on an architectural mass in the second plane a frieze of sculpture or painting, but I fear that it was only the extravagant archaeological taste of the period that cajoled him, between the quite intact temple of the sermon and the actors, into inserting illogically a bit of a ruin. The background of the panel in which St. Felix is dragged by mules illustrates his proclivity in outdoor scenes for introducing a perspective of a series of buildings in a city. He manifests not only curiosity about architectural perspective, but with an Italianate academic velleity rare in Spain thus early in the Renaissance, he creates for himself a difficult problem of very peculiar foreshortening in one of the angels who rescue the martyr from the water.

A subordinate trait of his personality, yet not without its interest, is such a passion for dogs, as in the case of the Antwerp mannerists, that he often introduces them in his works as secondary or sometimes almost as principal figures, rendering them with considerably more understanding of their form and character than when he treats other animals. The small hound, like a whippet, in the scene of the arraignment, for instance, should be compared with the awkwardly realized horses of the magistrates in the episode of the dragging; and it is most often such a hound that he depicts, following particularly in this instance, as Angulo has shown, the Antwerp mannerists, who liked its nervous lines.

As a part of the important contribution made by Angulo [25] to our understanding of Catalan painting of the period through indicating its very extensive indebtedness to Dürer's prints, he has discovered in the St. Felix Master a free adaptation of details from the great German rather than the somewhat slavish plagiarism by certain of his rivals. In the retable of St. Felix the debt is so slight that we should scarcely have noticed it, if his knowledge of Dürer were not more clearly revealed in his other achievements. The general composition in the scene of the saint's arraignment may have been vaguely suggested by the print of Christ before Caiaphas in the engraved series of the Little Passion, and certainly from this source came such minutiae as the dispositions of the potentate's feet and of Felix's hands. Angulo has perceived also that the canopy of the magistrate in the episode of the angelic visit to Felix in prison is derived from the *baldacchino* in the representation of St. John Evangelist's ordeal of the boiling oil in the woodcuts of the Apocalypse.

---

[25] *Archivo español de arte,* XVII (1944), 327–330. In this article slightly antedating his monographic treatment of the Master to which we have already often referred, Angulo describes him as "the supposed Porta."

There has now been consigned to the Provincial Museum at Gerona, as a relic of some undiscovered retable, a lone panel of the Crucifixion (Fig. 35), which constitutes the St. Felix Master's closest approximation, in its types, in their elongation and agitation, and in landscape to actual developed mannerism and to a mannerism very like that of Antwerp. The tendencies in mannerism to exaggeration take here an additional and curious form, a very inundation of the scene in blood. An even greater shower of gore falls from the Redeemer's body than in El Greco's version of the subject in the Prado, forming a pool to bathe the holy Mother's foot and then dividing into three rivulets flowing to the picture's edge. The blurring of lines in countenances, for example in one of his most characteristic types, the St. John, is carried further than in his other paintings. It is perhaps a false note to have allowed the same hound as in the St. Felix retable to constitute the sole balance in the lower right corner of the composition to the group of the Virgin and her companions at the left. In any case, the dog is once more better done than the horses behind him.

The outbreak of 1936 destroyed, except for a single panel, a most important monument of art in which both Angulo and I, working quite separately from each other, have discerned the St. Felix Master's authorship, a retable of St. Ursula that once decorated the chapel of this virgin martyr in the cathedral of Gerona but at least before the end of the seventeenth century was removed and eventually deposited over the high altar of the pilgrimage church [26] of Nuestra Señora de Olivas near a town just north of Gerona, San Esteban de Guialbes.[27] In the centre of the retable, the Master painted a standing effigy of St. Ursula, which, however, was at some time transferred to a wall of the church of Nuestra Señora de Olivas, giving place to a miniature temple containing a statue of Our Lady; and it is only the central panel by our artist that has survived, having now found a home in the Diocesan Museum at Gerona. The six narrative scenes from St. Ursula's life were retained at the sides of the retable, de-

---

[26] *Santuario.*

[27] F. Monsalvatje y Fossas, *Nomenclator histórico de las iglesias parroquiales y rurales, santuarios y capillas de la provincia de Gerona*, Olot, 1908, pp. 98–100.

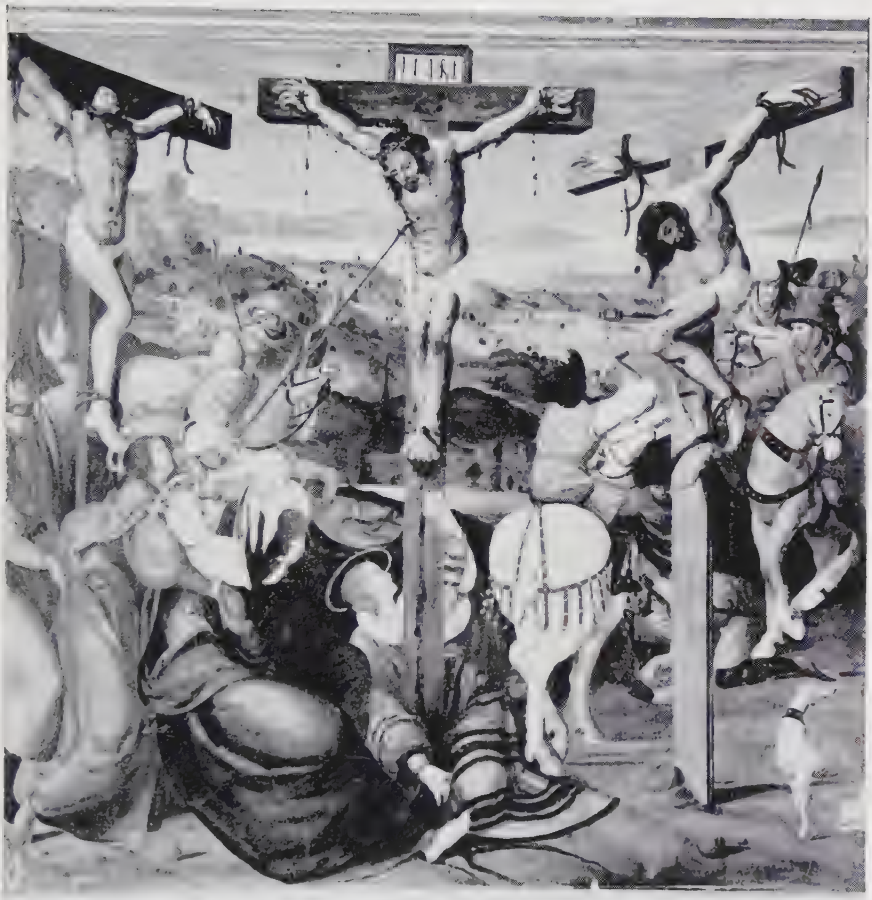

FIG. 35. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. CRUCIFIXION.
PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

picting the king of England's embassy begging her hand for his son from her father, the king of Brittany, her dream of the future crown of martyrdom, the father's leave-taking of her and the now assembled maidens who were to be her companions, her meeting with her successful suitor, the English prince,[28] her benediction by the Pope Cyriacus, and, against the background of the wholesale martyrdom at Cologne, St. Ursula, before she herself is done to death, rejecting the advances of the leader of the murderous Huns. With the originality of mind that the St. Felix Master everywhere displays, the retable then expands further to the sides with subjects unusual at such spots in altarpieces, four compartments that are much larger than those of St. Ursula's story and contain each a seated figure of a worthy of the Old Testament (Fig. 36).

Angulo has singled out the main additional factors that the retable of Nuestra Señora de Olivas reveals in the Master's personality, principally a concern, in the four effigies from the elder dispensation, with more solemnly monumental forms than in the retable of St. Felix and the extension of this mood to soberer and more august classicism in their architectural settings. One gets the feeling that he might have been familiar with the more ornate representations of similar themes by Pedro Berruguete in the Fathers of the Church that constitute a part of the predella of the retable over the high altar of the cathedral at Avila or in the Prophets in the predella of the retable at Becerril de Campos, and we should thus be perhaps provided with further support for the hypothesis advanced on a former page that he had at some time in his life profited by a Castilian experience. The mood of comparative sedateness in the retable of St. Ursula affects even the edifices in the episodes from her legend, making them in general simpler and less gorgeous than in the altarpiece that gives the artist his pseudonym. The backgrounds of St. Ursula's farewell to her father, of her interview with the Pope, and of the scene of martyrdom afforded an opportunity for the same grandiose kind of marine landscape as the torture of St. Felix upon the *eculeus* and the Crucifixion of the Provincial Museum at Gerona. Angulo has also pointed out that the Master's interest in the graphic arts did not stop with Dürer but that he followed closely for the dreaming St. Ursula Marcantonio's (or a follower's?) print of St. Helen's vision, which served also Veronese for his representation,

---

[28] I am not entirely certain of the theme of this compartment at the upper right.

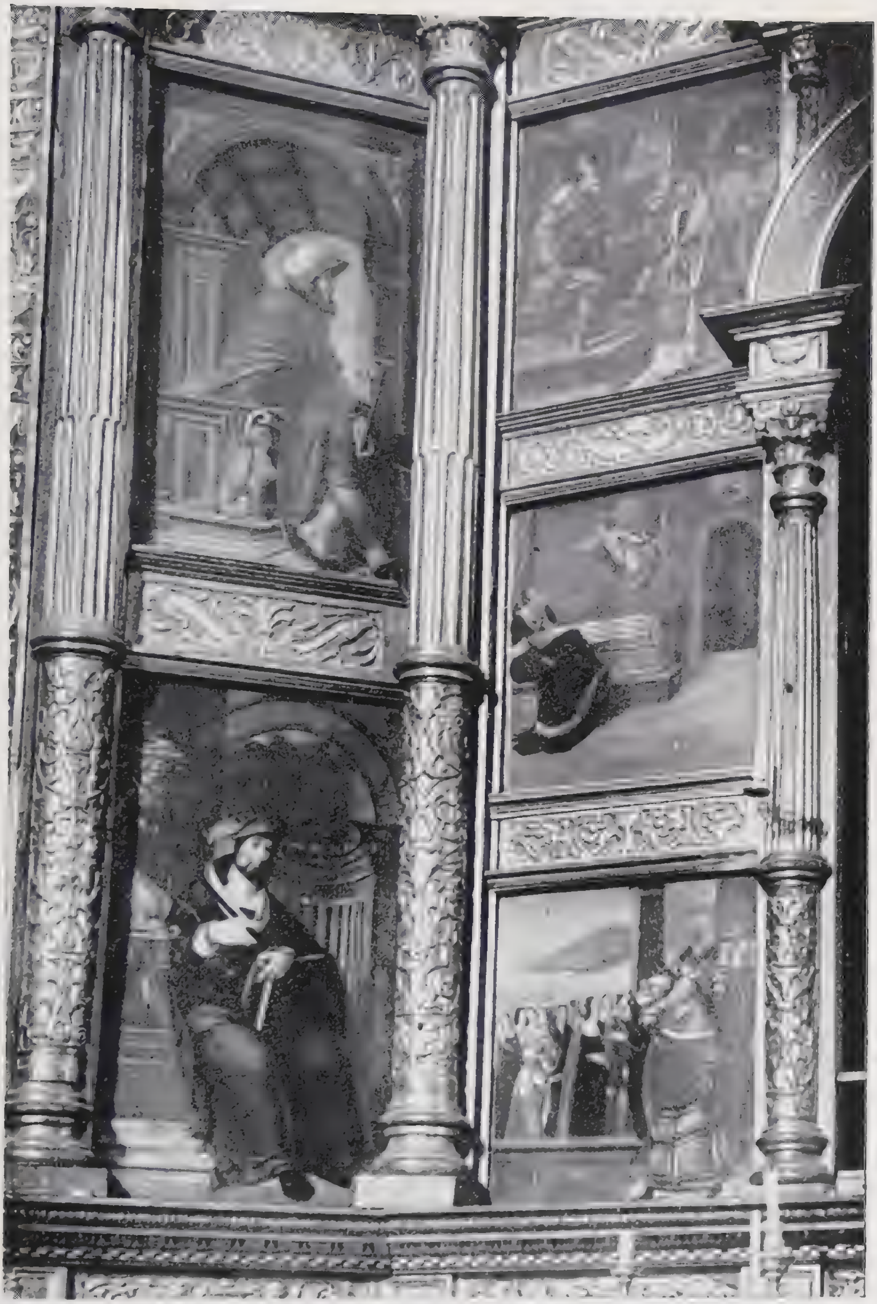

Fig. 36. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. LEFT SECTION OF RETABLE OF ST. URSULA. FORMERLY IN CHURCH OF NUESTRA SEÑORA DE OLIVAS, NEAR SAN ESTEBAN DE GUIALBES

(*Photo. Mas*)

in the National Gallery at London, of the latter theme. Unfortunately the painter was least successful in the one piece that remains to us, the central effigy, the reason being that his inventive temperament, attuned to the experimental alertness of the Renaissance, chafed beneath the mediaeval necessity, still imposed upon him, of treating the figure like a cult-image.

The St. Felix Master solves one of the puzzles of Spanish art by turning out to be the author of a cycle the attribution of which had long baffled critics, the six large panels of the story of St. Andrew in the meeting-hall in the hospital for poor priests attached to the church of Nuestra Señora del Milagro at Valencia. Since they are found in a Valencian institution, connoisseurs had actually sought their author in the local school. Bertaux [29] suggested a follower of Paolo da San Leocadio; Tormo [30] thought of some pupil of Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina; and Mayer [31] proposed the presumed son of Fernando de Llanos, Andrés, who, however, is still an unknown quantity.[32] As a matter of fact there is no niche in the Valencian school into which they really fit, and a study of the St. Felix Master's achievements revealed both to Gudiol Ricart [33] and to me separately and without collusion that only this painter could have executed the St. Andrew series. Angulo [34] has concurred in Gudiol's opinion. Bertaux indeed remarks that it is not certain that the panels were originally done for the church of the Milagro; and the recent emergence of two further compartments from the set in a private collection at Barcelona may imply that, like the rest of the St. Felix Master's works, the retable of St. Andrew was ordered for a Catalan church and that, when it had once been dismantled, six of its sections were presented by some pious donor in fairly modern times to the institution at Valencia. If the retable was not from the first in the Milagro, the hypothesis [35] of the Master's affiliation with Valencia is impaired.

As we shall perceive in the case of his follower, the Catalan Monogrammist, he sometimes found it difficult to discover enough events

[29] *Revue archéologique*, XI (1908), 19.

[30] *Levante*, 103.

[31] *Geschichte*, etc., edition of 1922, p. 121.

[32] See my vol. XI, pp. 99–101.

[33] *Spanish Painting*, Toledo, Ohio, 1941, p. 50.

[34] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 348, and his *Pintura del Renacimiento*, Madrid, 1954, p. 59.

[35] See above, pp. 80 and 86.

in the sacred stories to fill the multiple compartments that, with their love of narrative, the Spaniards of the time demanded in their retables, and so, in the first of the panels at Valencia, Pentecost is forced into service as an occasion in St. Andrew's life, although which of the figures of the Apostles should here be identified with him it is impossible to say. The other five of the Valencian set depict some of his highly sensational miracles, and the themes of all of the quintet had already been included in earlier retables in Catalonia and elsewhere in Spain.[36] Taking them in the order in which they are listed in the *Golden Legend*, we first see St. Andrew's young convert miraculously extinguishing the fire by which his parents had sought to burn the house where he and the Apostle were residing. Then, at Nicaea St. Andrew exorcises the seven dogs into whom devils had transformed themselves but whose demoniacal nature the painter has signified by giving them clawed feet (Fig. 37). There follows in the panels the immediately succeeding episode in the story, the Apostle's raising of a youth whom the dogs had killed. The even more stupendous miracle of resurrection comes next, the restoration to life of his forty would-be disciples drowned by a tempest of Satanic origin on their way to receive his instruction. The ship is foundering in the background, but only a part of the whole aggregation of forty can be coerced into the compartment, depicted beside St. Andrew on the seashore and two of them apparently conceived as still not raised from a prostrate position. The final piece at Valencia sets forth the tale of St. Andrew, disguised as a pilgrim, saving the virtue of the bishop from the wiles of the devil who has taken the shape of a beautiful woman: the Apostle at the door, after answering the three questions that had been put to him, is revealing the temptress's real character to the prelate's messenger, and in the dining room within she is in the act of vanishing above the table from the bishop's presence.

The two compartments at Barcelona carry us to the end of St. Andrew's life, his refusal to comply with the command of Aegeas to commit idolatry and his flagellation prior to his martyrdom upon the cross (Fig. 38). It is not only the subjects that demonstrate them to have belonged to the retable of the series at Valencia. They em-

---

[36] Vols. II, pp. 328 and 432, and IV, p. 260. For the attribution of the retable in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, to the Roussillon Master, see vol. VII, p. 777.

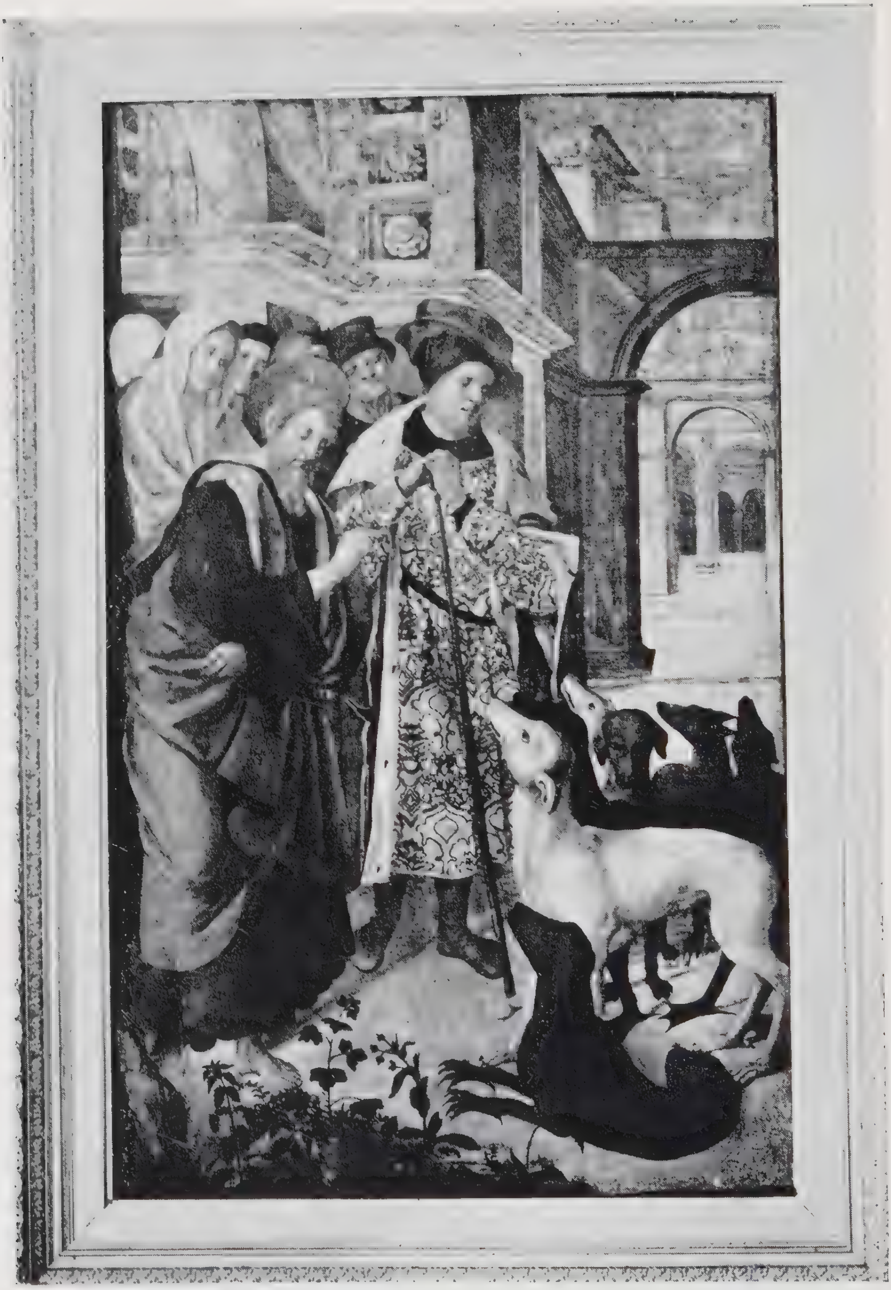

FIG. 37. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. ST. ANDREW EXORCISING THE DEMONIACAL DOGS, SECTION OF RETABLE. NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL MILAGRO, VALENCIA
(*Photo. Girolo*)

body precisely the same phase of the St. Felix Master's style; St. Andrew is the identical old man who is seen in the panels of the resurrection of the forty mariners and the bishop's temptation (even within the Valencian series itself being somewhat varied in the other compartments); and the paintings both at Barcelona and Valencia provide examples in which, like Juan and Pedro Gascó, the St. Felix Master has clung to the mediaeval Catalan school's practice of substituting brilliantly patterned gold backgrounds for the skies, employing for his retable of St. Andrew the formal design of an ostentatious but unembossed brocade.

When once the authorship of the St. Felix Master has been proposed, it would be an insult to the reader's own powers of perception to itemize what he can at once see for himself, the countless points of indissoluble contact between the panels of St. Andrew and the painter's other works. Everywhere there emerge the same types, often in the case of men inspired by mannerism, the same elaborate, richly colored, and even gold-accented architectural settings, the same occasional retention of the bright fabrics of the earlier school, and the same general methods. To select just two instances of absolute repetition of types, in the scene of the resurrection of the young man slain by dogs the victim himself duplicates the angel just above the jailer's keys in the angelic visit to St. Felix in prison, and the uppermost of the feminine spectators does not differ from the maiden who, second from the left, listens to St. Felix's sermon. Both of these faces in the Valencian panel, moreover, are treated with his typical *sfumatezza,* which is applied also to many other figures in the series. In the compartment of the exorcism of the dogs the painter indulges, perhaps on Pacher's precedent, in an even deeper succession of receding architectural planes than in the background of the edifice in which St. Felix delivers his exhortation; and the opulently dressed personage who here stands beside St. Andrew has the fleshy face that he so often affects. Perhaps because the dogs here and in the scene of the youth's resurrection were abnormal creatures, he has not done quite his best with them, but when, as so frequently in his other pictures, he introduces them gratuitously into the bishop's palace and the temple of the idol, he rises to his usual dexterity in their delineation. In the latter instance it is the same hound (the painter's own pet?) that intrudes into the tribunal of St. Felix's arraignment, and the beast of similar breed in the palace scans with

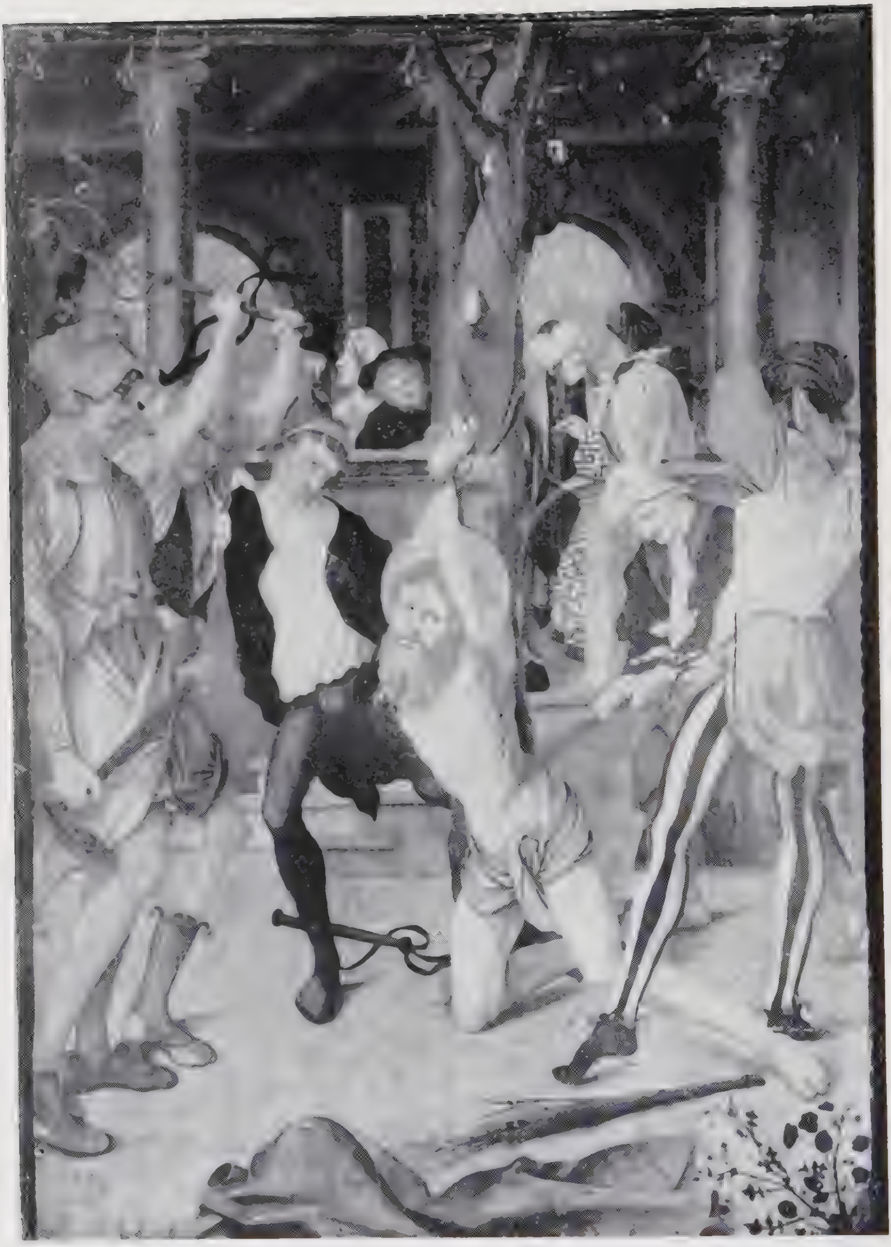

Fig. 38. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. FLAGELLATION OF ST. ANDREW, SECTION OF RETABLE. PRIVATE COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

characteristic canine curiosity the animated conversation between St. Andrew and the messenger.

As customarily, the Master does not much concern himself with new or piquant schemes of composition. The scenes of the fire and of the bishop's rescue from evil have a certain interest, which, however, is largely imposed by the very themes. The lad converted by St. Andrew, with the Apostle beside him, pours the water on the conflagration from one of the elevated loggias so beloved by the Master, while his discomfited parents below at the right are balanced by a group of spectators at the left, one of whom is just climbing into visibility from a lower level. The composition of the bishop's delivery from the she-devil is thrown on the bias, so that the colloquy of St. Andrew and the episcopal messenger will not obscure what is taking place in the dining hall of the second plane. The series of panels are as spotted with manneristic forms as the St. Felix retable, for example the brightly garbed messenger of the bishop and practically all the actors in the flagellation. The agitation that mannerism carries with it is more apparent perhaps than in any of the Master's other creations. The nature of the subject partially demands it in the flagellation, but it is rather the temper of mannerism that provokes the approach to frenzy in the vanishing temptress and in the foremost pilgrim raised by St. Andrew from a watery grave. It is thus somewhat difficult to accept, despite the gold backgrounds, Ainaud's assignment of the retable to the Master's early period.

The compartment of the flagellation of the Apostle exhibits, as Angulo[37] has discerned, a dependence upon Dürer's print of St. John's ordeal of the boiling oil in the two scourgers at the left and in the introduction of a parapet into the setting, behind which the St. Felix Master has adopted from his German inspirer even a spectator in a high hat.

If we could conclusively affirm that the St. Felix Master was Joan de Burgunya, we might regard as partially documented another major work that internal evidence shows him to have executed, though perhaps with some aid from an assistant or collaborator, a retable of the Magdalene the parts of which are preserved in the Provincial Museum, Tarragona.[38] In other words the retable would be the one for

[37] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 329.

[38] I therefore have finally abandoned the attempt that I foreshadowed in vol. XI, p. 114, to attribute the retable to a separate but closely affiliated personality

the monastery of Santas Creus with which Joan de Burgunya was busied in 1510.[39] The panels of the retable belong to a group of paintings in the Museum known to come from the monasteries of Poblet and Santas Creus, but the first obstacle to regarding the retable as a documented achievement of Joan de Burgunya is that we cannot be absolutely sure that it was once not in the former institution but in the latter, the place to which the document takes us.[40] Moreover, as a second obstacle, the document does not specify the retable of 1510 as devoted to the Magdalene. Altars honoring her were so frequent that almost certainly one must have existed not only at Santas Creus but also at Poblet, and, as a matter of fact, there are now at Tarragona no less than two others of the early sixteenth century, both done for the cathedral.[41] Indeed, we are definitely informed of a retable of the Magdalene completed for Santas Creus by June, 1502, which, however, can scarcely be the example by the St. Felix Master. The information comes from a document[42] having to do with the settlement of a dispute between Masters Petit and Daniel in regard to their respective shares in the remuneration for an already finished retable of the Magdalene at Santas Creus, and we learn that the first name of Petit was Juan from a number of other notices of him to which we shall forthwith return. We are by no means thus enabled to

---

whom I then called the Master of the Trees, although the mere attempt strengthens my present hypothesis of some aid from an assistant.

[39] See above, p. 80.

[40] At my request the great scholar of Tarragona, Mossén Pedro Batlle Huguet, has recently, with his habitual kindness, examined what sparse data there are in regard to the provenience of the retable of the Magdalene, but without definitive results. The old Catalogue of the Provincial Museum, dated in 1894, is of no help; but he points to an early report of the Commission for the Historical and Artistic Monuments of the Province of Tarragona (published by Juan Serra Vilaró in his book, *La Comisión de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos de la Provincia de Tarragona ante las ruínas del Monasterio de Poblet*, Tarragona, 1946, p. 144) in which there is mention of panels coming from Santas Creus, now in the Museum, and, since among them special reference is made to the processional painting that is supposed to be connected with a visit of Philip II to the monastery and will occupy us in a future volume (a work usually and wrongly supposed to come from Poblet), he assumes, but without conviction, that the series of the Magdalene might have been included in this lot. The early report, however, speaks of a half-dozen panels from Poblet which, although the probably not too expert writer of the report stigmatizes them, in his opinion, as valueless, are conceivably identical with the sections of the Magdalene's altarpiece from which six narrative compartments are preserved in addition to the Crucifixion and predella. Mossén Batlle himself writes me that he still deems the source of the Magdalene retable uncertain.

[41] See below, pp. 321 and 335.

[42] César Martinell, *El monestir de Santes Creus,* Barcelona, 1929, pp. 208–209.

jump at the hypothesis that Juan Petit or Master Daniel and not Joan de Burgunya was the St. Felix Master. In the first place, it is not ascertained that the provenience of the panels in the Tarragona Museum is Santas Creus instead of Poblet. A second difficulty is created by the date, 1502, since the style, already manneristic in spots, would naturally assign the retable to at least a decade later, more or less; and the only escape from the dilemma would be the perhaps not entirely incredible supposition that the partners precociously, through their own innate tendencies, anticipated slightly subsequent developments. Indeed, in certain respects we shall find the retable to be rather archaic. Neither Juan Petit nor Master Daniel, however, appears, from the archives, to have been so preëminent a figure in the artistic circles of the time, in contrast to Joan de Burgunya, as to have received the important commissions entrusted to the St. Felix Master.

Master Daniel, so far as I know, is not otherwise mentioned in the records of the time, but the name Juan Petit constantly emerges, although no securely documented achievement of his has been recognized. There are frequent entries of the offices held by a Juan Petit in the Barcelona guild of bridle-makers (where the painters were enrolled) from August, 1488, to August, 1512, and in all these notices he is described either simply as a painter or sometimes more specifically as a painter of tapestries,[43] the title that he is given also in his receipt for payment for an unascertained commission in 1508.[44] A notice of March 12, 1504,[45] which finds him engaged in punching and painting the leather cover of the high altar in the cathedral of Barcelona, refers to him both as a painter and as a worker for tapestries. The year 1499 affords a still broader idea of his versatility by revealing him in the rôle of an architect, since, denominated as a "master of houses," he then contracts, together with the sculptor Fray Jorge de Talavera, to do a door and three windows on the mansion of a citizen of Barcelona, Juan Llull,[46] but the fact is to be stressed that the document insists that the actual carving shall be handed over to Fray Jorge, suggesting that facility with the chisel was not among the talents of Juan Petit, who would have drawn only the designs.

[43] See an article by J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* II, 2 (1944), 67–70.

[44] See in another article by Madurell in the same publication, II, 3 (1944), 50.

[45] See J. Mas in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras,* Barcelona, VI (1911–1912), 309, 435, and 440.

[46] See still another article by Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* V, 3–4 (1947), 207.

As late as May 26, 1514, he is still recorded in an architectural capacity, as master of works in the cathedral of Tortosa.[47]

A perplexity might momentarily arise because in one of the documents referring to the transitory employment, *c.* 1516–1519, of the great and itinerant north-European sculptor, Jean Monet, at Barcelona, he is designated by the full appellation "Ioannem Petit Monet" instead of, as in the other instances, merely by the Latin or Catalan forms of the simpler Jean Monet;[48] but the painter and the sculptor cannot be one and the same person, inasmuch as the latter was not born until between 1485 and 1490 and the former was already active by 1488. We need not be surprised that they both bore the name Petit since it has always been a common appellation among the artists not only of France but even of the Low Countries and Germany and since we are informed of an embroiderer, Simón Petit, active in Barcelona at the beginning of the sixteenth century.[49]

Even if we could stretch our credulity to the point of connecting the preserved panels with the retable of 1502, we should still be involved in the problem of the nature of Juan Petit's and Daniel's collaboration and as to which was to be equated with the St. Felix Master. Unfortunately Martinell[50] does not reproduce but merely summarizes the document, loosely stating that in it Masters Petit and Daniel are called *pintors imaginaires* (painters, sculptors), whether he means that one was called a painter and the other a sculptor or that each had the double title. José F. Ráfols's *Diccionario biográfico de artistas de Cataluña*[51] describes Master Daniel as a carpenter and sculptor, but the book is not too trustworthy and probably doing no more than making its own interpretation of the document's words that I have quoted. More pertinent to our guesses is the fact that the financial dispute embodied in the document resulted in an equal division of the remuneration between the two litigants. Since the central compartment has been lost from the retable and might have been a statue instead of a painted effigy, did one of the twain do this and the other the painted panels? Recalling that Juan Petit may not have essayed sculpture,[52] may we suppose that the possible statue was Daniel's contribution? Or was the central effigy a painted figure in a somewhat diverse mode executed by the one of the partners who did not do the narrative sections, or could the task of this one of the partners have been only the architecture of the altarpiece and the carving of the frames? A conceivable but entirely indecisive argument for identifying the extant panels with the retable of 1502 would be the consideration that, amidst the general homogeneity of style, we may perhaps detect here and there the hand of an assistant, who would be one of the two partners that the document designates. If we only could persuade ourselves that the panels are those to which the document of 1502 refers, Juan Petit would be the more likely candidate to father them, because the mode of painting is more north-European than the general production of Catalonia or indeed of any other schools in the peninsula at the turn of the fifteenth into the sixteenth century, and we can hardly doubt that Juan Petit was a foreigner. His very name, Juan Petit, as in the case of the architect and sculptor active at Toledo in the opening years of the Renaissance who was called in the documents Peti Juan,[53] almost certainly implies a man of alien origin, whether or not the "Petit" should be interpreted as the French adjective *petit* and as signifying that the bearer of the appellation came from the French part of Belgium. It must be remembered also that Petit was one of the names of the great northern sculptor Jean Monet.[54]

---

[47] José Matamoros, *La Catedral de Tortosa*, Tortosa, 1932, p. 69.

[48] For Monet's activity at Barcelona, see below, p. 171 (in connection with his statues for the retable of the guild of silversmiths, the paintings of which were executed by Pedro Nunyes) and an article by Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, VI, 3–4 (1948), 350; and, for Monet's career elsewhere, as well as in Spain, Josef Duverger, M. J. Onghena, and P. K. van Daalen, *Nieuwe gegevens aangaande XVI*^{de} *eeuwse beildhouwers in Brabant en Vlanderen*, in *Medelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie*, XV (1953), no. 2. Madurell, however, confuses the painter with the sculptor, as does also José F. Ráfols's *Diccionario biográfico de artistas de Cataluña*, Barcelona, II (1953), under the heading Hans Petit Monet.

[49] See Madurell in the Portuguese periodical, *Museu*, VI (1950), 134.

[50] See above, p. 100, n. 42.

[51] Barcelona, I (1953), under the entry Daniel.

All these little points in favor of Juan Petit, nevertheless, are outweighed by the strong considerations that I have enumerated against him, and, if we are to recognize the St. Felix Master in any painter whose name we know, Joan de Burgunya still seems to me the most likely choice. Nor can we resort to a subterfuge, the equation of Juan Petit with Joan de Burgunya, since in this case some of the documents would have added *Petit* to the latter's name or, *vice versa, de Burgunya* to Petit's. Indeed, we have observed that in one of the few Catalan documents about the sculptor Jean Monet *Petit* is joined to his appellation.

---

[52] See above, p. 101.

[53] Vol. IX, p. 165.

[54] See above, p. 102.

After our long, wearisome, but necessary digression occasioned by the document of 1502, it is a relief to turn to the St. Felix Master's handsome retable itself. The sections preserved in the Museo Provincial at Tarragona consist in the pinnacle of the Crucifixion,[55] six lateral scenes from the Magdalene's life, and the predella. The shape of the six panels and the way in which some of them are still bound together reveal that the narrative strangely began at the lower left, read upward on this side, and then down at the right. The events chosen for representation are the Magdalene's washing of Christ's feet in Simon's house, the resurrection of her brother Lazarus (with their handmaid, St. Marcella,[56] beside St. Martha), the *Noli me tangere*, one of her colloquies, in the presence of Lazarus and Martha, with the prince of Provence and his wife, her levitation through the assistance of angels, and her last communion at the hands of St. Maximin (Fig. 39). She is also much featured in the Crucifixion. The predella marshals as half-lengths, against gold backgrounds daintily incised with a foliate *motif*, the Virgin, St. John, St. Andrew, and St. Bartholomew flanking Christ of the Passion between two angels.

Angulo [57] once held that the St. Felix Master executed the Crucifixion in the retable of the Magdalene and indeed probably the whole retable, although he was not absolutely unwilling to assign the entire assemblage except the Crucifixion to a follower of this artist, and subsequently [58] he perceived an intense participation of the shop or the presence of some assistant; but the echoing of exactly the same types, technique, and degree of attainment throughout the retable seems to me definitely to prove that it is all in a single style and that the Crucifixion cannot be divorced from the other panels as if by another hand, however much, in one or two passages of the altarpiece, we may perhaps discern the intrusion of an assistant to a more tangible degree than in most works by a master and his atelier. The Crucifixion is

---

[55] Martinell (*op. cit.*, 210) wrongly suggests that there may have belonged to the retable a Crucifixion still at Santas Creus, which he illustrates on a plate opposite p. 269 but which we shall find to have been painted at a later date in the sixteenth century by Jaime Forner.

[56] See below, p. 141.

[57] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 355–357.

[58] *Pintura del Renacimiento*, Madrid, 1954, p. 63 .

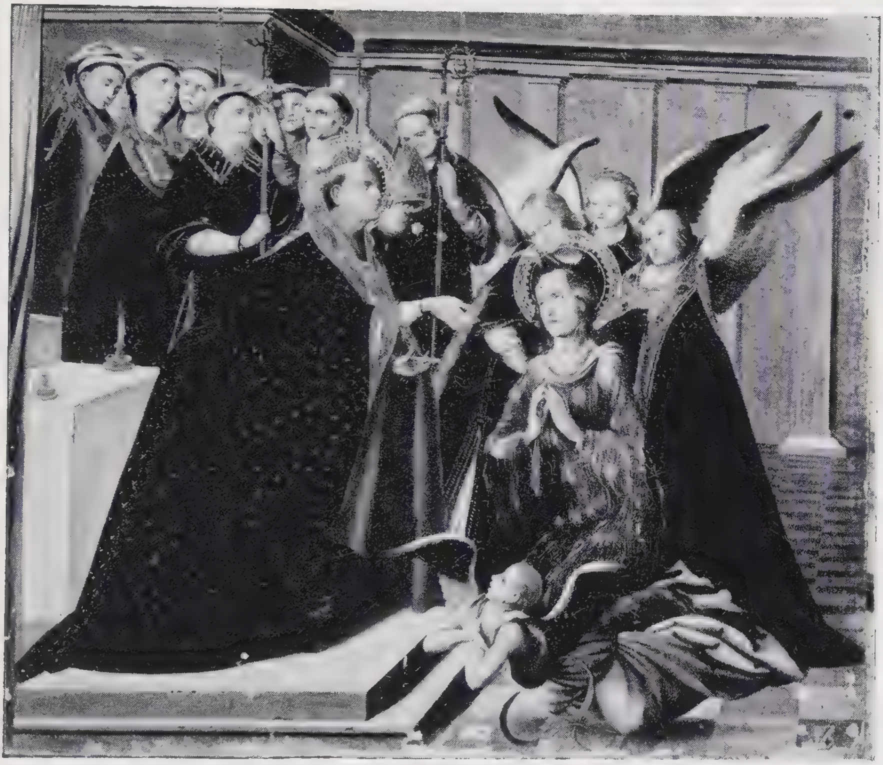

Fig. 39. THE ST. FELIX MASTER (AND AN ASSISTANT?). LAST COMMUNION OF THE MAGDALENE, SECTION OF RETABLE. PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

indeed astonishingly like the rendering by the St. Felix Master in the Provincial Museum, Gerona. Throughout the retable the variations from his norms in composition, landscape, and even types are slight. The Magdalene embracing the cross and the St. John are practically identical in countenances with recurrent youthful and angelic faces in the St. Felix Master's output, and these types are repeated throughout the sections of the Tarragona retable. In the group beneath the cross of the redeemed thief at the left there even emerges one of the St. Felix Master's highly individualized, corpulent specimens of humanity, and a similar, fleshy visage is used for the St. Lazarus behind the Magdalene in the scene of her interview with the lord of Provence.

Such comparisons could be multiplied, but I will not further tax the patience of the reader, already bored by the discussion of the problem of Juan Petit, since the attribution, fortified by Ainaud's acceptance, requires no more demonstration to anyone who has made himself familiar with the St. Felix Master's procedures.

The panels are characterized by a predilection, more pronounced than in his other works, for great sweeps of drapery as mere decorative constituents of the compositions, especially in the scene of the Magdalene's last communion, where the broad expanses of the copes of St. Maximin and the standing angels seem to embody a reversion to the modes of the Van Eycks; and we shall perhaps not err in seeing in this trait a touch of an assistant. The fluttering garments of the angels supporting the Magdalene in her levitation also look like the Flemish examples of the fifteenth rather than of the sixteenth century.

We might wish to ascribe such characteristics to a phase of the St. Felix Master himself earlier than that incorporated in his other extant productions, but in several aspects the retable is very advanced. Mannerism declares itself: in some of the very types, as in certain of the Apostles in the scene of the washing of Christ's feet; in a tendency to precious postures and gestures, as in the two actors in the *Noli me tangere*; in a frequent nervous agitation, as in practically all the participants in the Crucifixion; and in the disjointed articulation of the thieves who suffer with Christ. The uppermost of the soldiers who bicker for the seamless garment of the Saviour is thrown (though partly for the sake of a compact group) into an arbitrary posture that makes him look deformed. Even the two dogs that dispute a bone on the pavement of the room in Simon's house are given extravagantly affected shapes and attitudes.

The resemblances of the angels in the Magdalene's levitation to those of Filippino Lippi are not sufficiently tangible to compel a belief in an acquaintance with the Italian painter's productions; and indeed, although the St. Felix Master, as usual, exhibits in the Tarragona panels some knowledge of the architecture of the Renaissance, there are no Italian types or other elements in them that could not have been acquired through their north-European adaptations. The analogy of the Christ of the Passion in the predella to Antonello's representations of the theme is not so close that it might not have been fortuitous. The most Italianate factors in the retable are the Raphaelesque youths who serve the dinner in the house of Simon. The unnecessarily large crowd of clerics assisting St. Maximin as he communicates the Magdalene, many of them appearing only as heads, is perhaps a bit of homage to the older tradition of Catalan painting. With praiseworthy initiative, in the panel of the washing of Christ's feet the table is foreshortened inward and obliquely in anticipation of Tintoretto's compositions for the Last Supper; but the Master was not equipped with the scientific knowledge to solve the problem, nor has he made clear or convincing the relation of the very much featured tiling of the pavement to the figures seated at the feast.

It is once more in the realm of landscape that he rises almost to first rank. The Crucifixion, the resurrection of Lazarus, the *Noli me tangere,* and the levitation of the Magdalene, all of them, illustrate his method of setting the action, to a further degree than in his other works, on an elevation in the foreground so as to give us from this eminence some of the broadest, deepest, and most luminous vistas of plains, waters, and hills to be found anywhere in the range of the Fine Arts. It is not too much to say that in such achievements he vies with Conrad Chapman's great view of the Valley of Mexico. For the sake of lending the proper, smaller scale to the distance, in the Tarragona cycle, he, or mayhap his presumptive collaborator, likes to set trees at the edge of the elevation, and especially upon the palm trees in the levitation and the pine in the resurrection of Lazarus he bestows a feathery lightness that perhaps again could be interpreted as a north-European characteristic. The dendrological interests extend, in the resurrection of Lazarus, to the addition of a row of

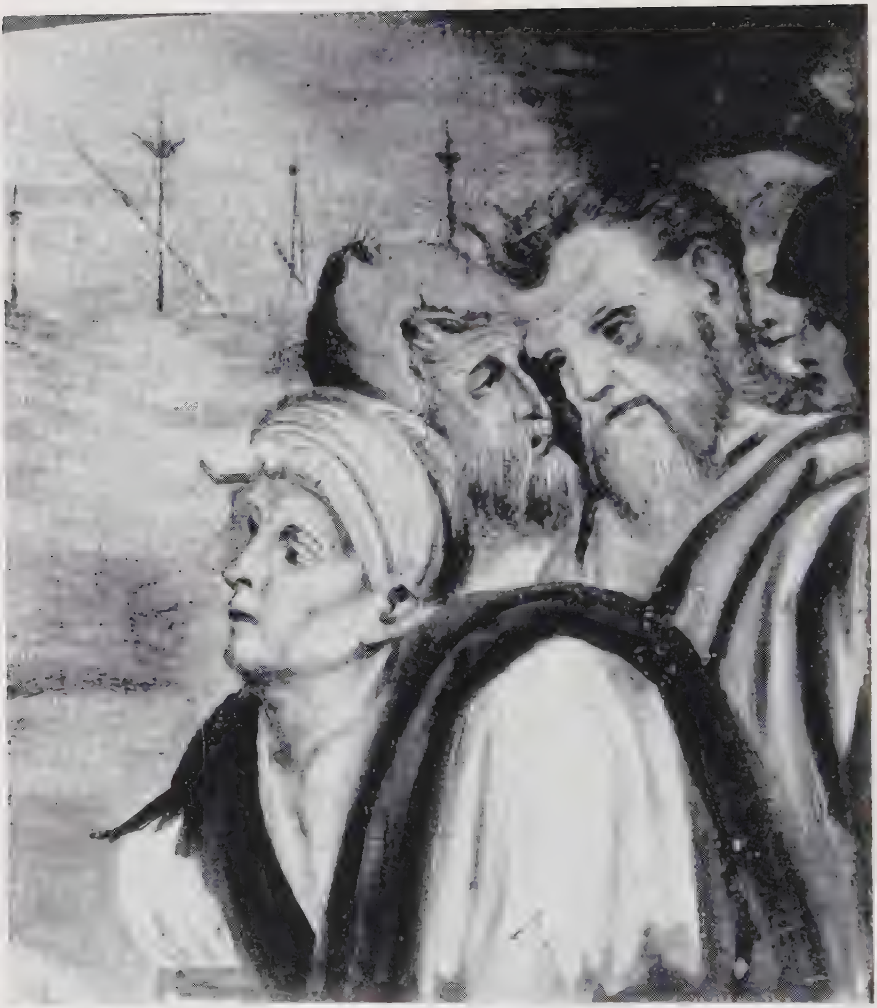

Fig. 40. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. FRAGMENT. CARRERAS CANDI COLLECTION, BARCELONA

(*Photo. Mas*)

prettily schematized and formally spaced cypresses, patterned behind a wall, against the remote stretch of country.

The presence of the St. Felix Master's recurrent types fully justifies Angulo in ascribing to him a fragment of a panel in the Carreras y Candi Collection at Barcelona preserving only the upper bodies of a group of figures before the background of the seacoast (Fig. 40). I myself am pretty well persuaded that he was the author of two other small panels in the same Collection displaying standing figures of St. Francis receiving the stigmata and of St. Augustine carrying his frequent emblem, a small symbol of the Church of which he was one of the four Fathers (Fig. 41). Whether or not deriving from the same retable as the fragment recognized by Angulo, they agree with the Master's rather distinctive technical methods not only in general but in many details. St. Augustine and even to a certain extent St. Francis betray his addiction to squinting glances, and both indulge in mannered gesticulations highly characteristic of his methods. The upraised left hand of St. Francis is actually reproduced in the case of the magistrate in the scene of St. Felix's angelic visitation and again in the man pointing to the redeemed malefactor in the Crucifixion of the Provincial Museum, Gerona. For St. Augustine's right hand, counterparts are not far to seek, e.g., in a retainer directly above the magistrate in the just mentioned episode from St. Felix's life or in the excited member of the group rescued by St. Andrew from the sea in the retable at Valencia. Even the actual countenances are at least approximated in the Master's certified achievements, since St. Francis resembles the various representations of St. Felix and St. Augustine recalls the man with bended knee in the compartment of St. Felix's arraignment. The retention of the old auric backgrounds, incised with a brocaded pattern, has already attracted our notice in the altarpiece of St. Andrew.

We can set up very good arguments for provisionally assigning to the St. Felix Master also the panel of St. Barbara in the parish church of Oix that in volume VII [59] betrayed me into such fumbling for an attribution. The face and headdress of the virgin martyr conform to a feminine type often seen in the retable that gives him his name; both she and the incisively characterized donor display his mode of chiaroscuro; he employs similar haloes, as if of filigree, in the

---

[59] P. 42 and fig. 12.

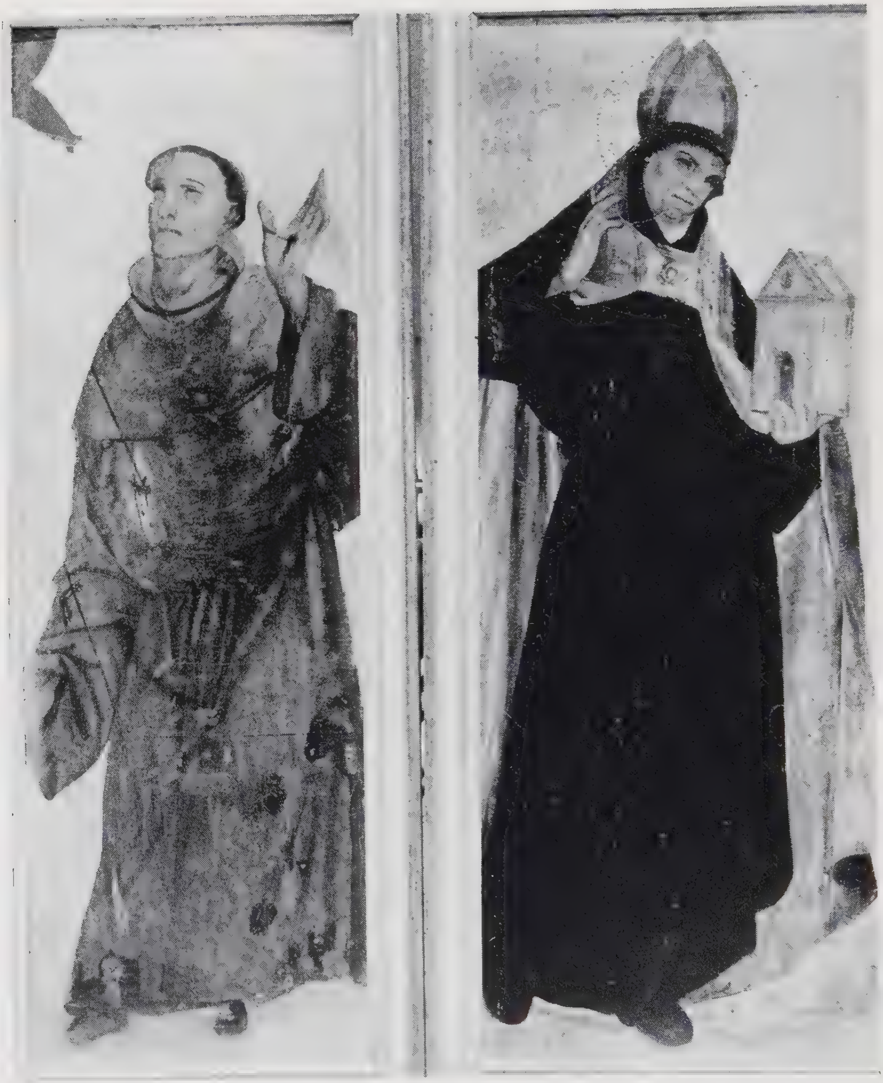

FIG. 41. THE ST. FELIX MASTER (?). STS. FRANCIS AND AUGUSTINE. CARRERAS CANDI COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Tarragona retable; and the picture was made for a place in the province where he was so largely active, Gerona.

With still more equanimity one can champion his right to a panel of the Madonna of the Immaculate Conception in the Toreno Collection at Madrid (Fig. 42). He has depicted her as accompanied by a banderole inscribed with the verse from the Song of Songs, II, 2, which is so regularly a part of the iconography of the subject, "Sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias," and in conformity the Child carries a cluster of thorns from which a lily emerges. Not only does she exhibit precisely the Master's treatment of the flesh, facial chiaroscuro, and glints of light upon the hair, but it seems impossible that any other than he could have painted an actual countenance so like those of two of the angels consoling St. Felix in prison or especially of the prominent maiden looking out at us from the congregation that hears the martyr's sermon. The Child also incorporates an infantile version of one of his characteristic human types and even of the distinctive glance that he gives to the eyes. As a matter of fact, a Morellian factor may be brought into play for fixing the attribution, the mode of delineating the hands, particularly of closely pressing groups of fingers together.

I wish that I could demonstrate that the St. Felix Master enjoyed the honor of patronage in the cathedral of Tarragona, as well as in a monastery in its province, by ascribing to him convincingly two works that I last saw in the old Salas Capitulares of the great church, large panels, evidently companion-pieces, depicting Sts. Stephen and Quiteria, the latter with a kneeling clerical donor and with a pair of mad dogs [60] as attributes instead of the more customary single hound (Fig. 43). Certainly we can exclude as candidates any of the other contemporary painters whom we know to have been employed in the edifice.[61] By reason of the subject of one of the pictures and because their style places them at the beginning of the Cinquecento, they might have been parts of the scheme of remodelling in the chapel of St. Stephen in the cathedral that was financed by the canon Juan Barceló in 1508.[62] Indeed, nothing prevents us from merely guessing that they were among the "Gothic" panels recorded

---

[60] As in a painting by Juan de Borgoña: see vol. X, p. 403.

[61] See below, chapter XIII.

[62] S. Capdevila, *Tarragona, Guía histórico-arqueológica*, Tarragona, 1929, p. 137, and also his work, *La Seu de Tarragona*, supplement to *Analecta sacra tarraconensia* of 1934, pp. 45–46.

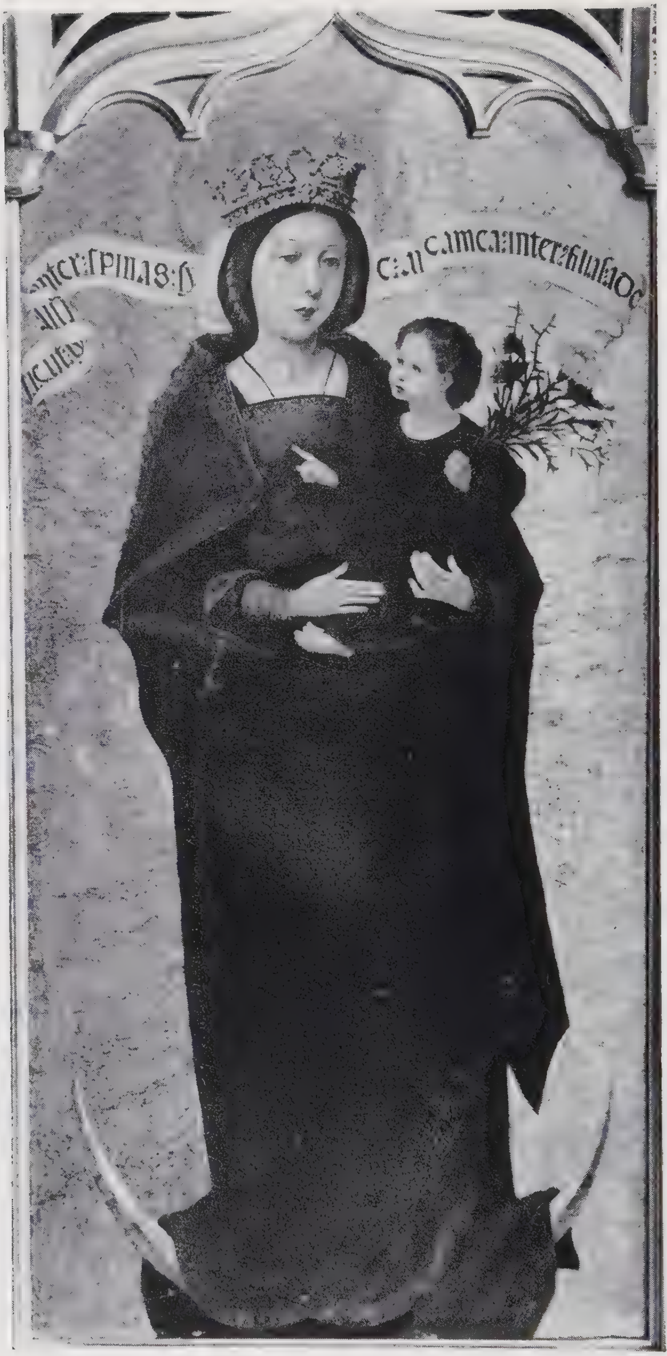
sicut:ly
lium
inter:spinas:s
amca:inter:filias de

FIG. 42. THE ST. FELIX MASTER. MADONNA
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.
TORENO COLLECTION, MADRID
(*Photo. Mas*)

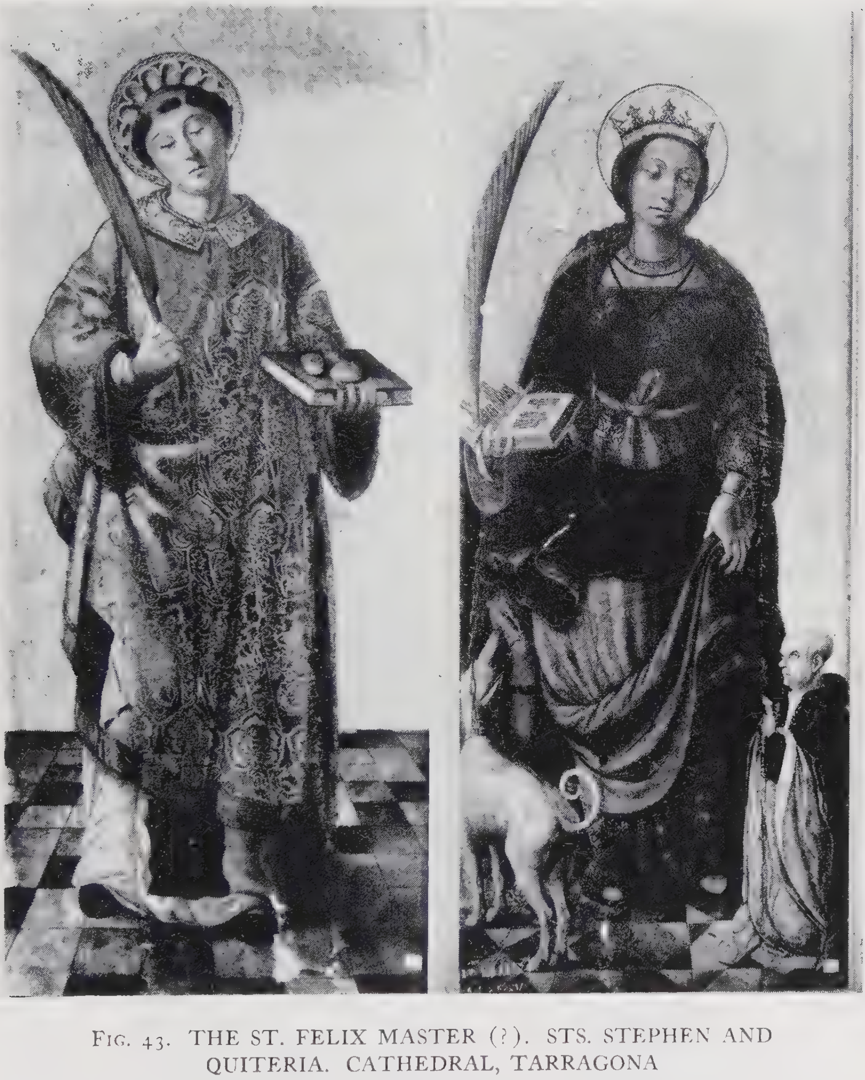

Fig. 43. THE ST. FELIX MASTER (?). STS. STEPHEN AND QUITERIA. CATHEDRAL, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

to have been removed from the chapel in the middle of the ninteenth century, since the word "Gothic" would at this time have loosely been applied to paintings of the early Renaissance. With our lack of information about the history of the chapel, however, it is hard to see why St. Quiteria should have been united with St. Stephen as a recipient of devotion, but, if the two panels do actually derive from the chapel, the donor kneeling at her feet would be Juan Barceló.

To try to authenticate the panels as creations of the St. Felix Master we have to rely upon stylistic analogies rather than upon any very specific resemblances in types. The most unescapable evidence is supplied by the figure of the donor in whose head the drawing, the modelling, and the way the paint is laid on can be exactly paralleled in no other artist's work. The readiest examples, in the Magdalene's retable, of this mode of rendering are found among the Apostles in the scene of her washing of Christ's feet and in the St. Maximin administering to her the last rites. Less determinative are the partial likeness of the head of the ecclesiastic at the extreme left in the group attendant upon St. Maximin to the St. Stephen and a certain similarity of the St. Quiteria to the St. Ursula of the Diocesan Museum, Gerona, a type that is not otherwise met in the St. Felix Master unless we are willing to assign to him the Oix St. Barbara. Strangely enough, it is the analogy of animals that is more persuasive, i.e., the dogs of St. Quiteria, who recall, among his representations of this beast, especially the foremost of the infernal hounds quelled by St. Andrew in the Valencian altarpiece. The garbs of both St. Quiteria and St. Stephen could be taken as reflecting the Master's fondness for rich brocades.

With possibly as much confidence we may tentatively claim for the St. Felix Master a panel in the Sala Capitular of the cathedral of Barcelona, representing St. Vincent the Martyr in converse with St. Vincent Ferrer and in all likelihood remaining to us as the principal compartment of an otherwise lost retable jointly dedicated to them (Fig. 44). I cannot find that there was ever in the cathedral a chapel coupling them in honor; but the present chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario was once under the invocation of St. Vincent the Martyr,[63] and such was perhaps the original location of the panel, in which the very popular St. Vincent Ferrer would have been associated with the Martyr at the demand of the donor on the precedent of the

---

[63] J. Mas. *Guía-itinerario de la Catedral de Barcelona,* Barcelona, 1916, p. 71.

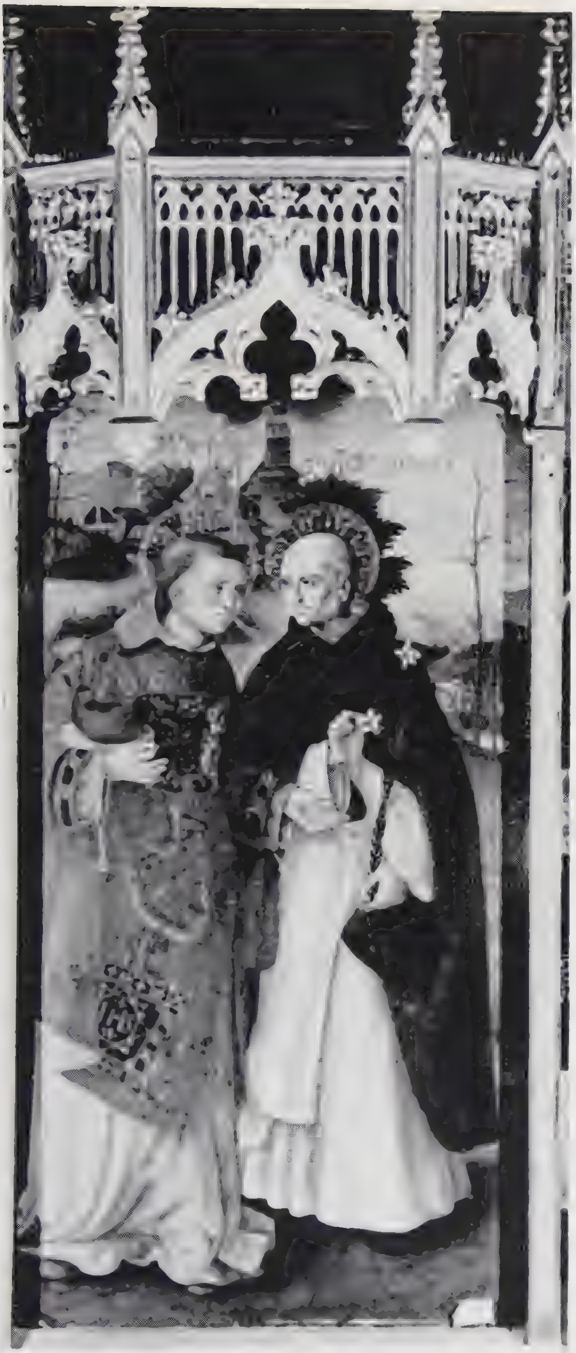

Fig. 44. THE ST. FELIX MASTER (?). ST. VINCENT THE MARTYR AND ST. VINCENT FERRER. CATHEDRAL, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

frequent union of the two St. Johns in altarpieces. Their names are inscribed above them as respectively Martyr and Confessor, and the former carries not only his usual attribute of the millstone but also, as a much rarer emblem,[64] a boat, probably symbolizing the vessel that carried his body from Valencia to Portugal. The old Spanish *motif* of two saints paired and rigidly facing us as cult-figures at the centre of a retable loses here its hieraticism and is transformed into the natural representation of the sacred personages discussing familiarly pious themes while out on a promenade.

The arguments for the authorship are manifold. The head of St. Vincent Ferrer is a prime example of the distinctive kind of modelling to which I have referred in describing the donor of the two panels in the cathedral of Tarragona, and the types of both St. Vincents are nearly repeated among the clerics behind St. Maximin in the scene of the Magdalene's last communion. The martyr's head is more or less approximated in the representations of St. Felix at Gerona — more in the case of the latter as he stands rescued by angels from the sea; and, a matter of still greater significance, the curious *mudéjar* patterns on the vestments of St. Felix find a not very different form on the orphreys of the martyr's sleeves. His dalmatic is caught up at the same oblique line and takes almost the same folds as that of the Tarragona St. Stephen. The haloes, resembling openwork in the manner of filigree, are duplicated throughout the Magdalene's altarpiece. Again the figures stand on an eminence in the foreground, as in this altarpiece, allowing us to look down upon and over a large tract of country at the right, and once more a slim and elegant tree, in this instance a dead one, is planted conspicuously on the edge of the height.

We perhaps ought to descry the collaborating hand of the presumptive Tarragona assistant in a handsome panel, once in the Homar Collection, Barcelona, depicting the Madonna standing between Sts. Nicholas and Gerard (Fig. 45). In the haloes of the two former sacred personages, their names are inscribed in Latin and in the vocative,[65] but the legend on the nimbus of St. Gerard is in Catalan, "Sant Girart (a form of the word unusual at the time in the language of the east coast), pregau (second person of the imperative in the

---

[64] Maurice and Wilfred Drake, *Saints and their Emblems*, London, 1916, p. 133.

[65] The neck of the Virgin's dress is embellished with the beginning of the Magnificat, and a little further down are the words Mater Virgo; but I do not recognize what is written on the lowest border of the costume.

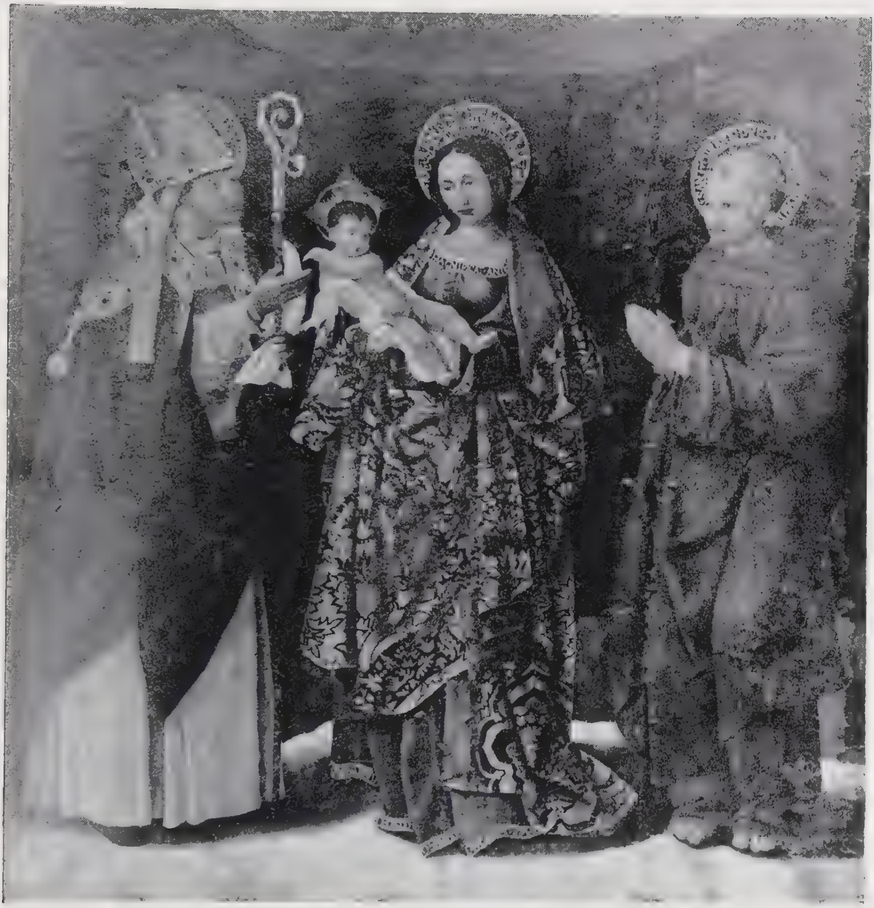

Fig. 45. THE ST. FELIX MASTER AND AN ASSISTANT (?). MADONNA BETWEEN STS. NICHOLAS AND GERARD. HOMAR COLLECTION, BARCELONA

(Photo. Mas)

honorific plural) per nos" (Saint Gerard, pray for us). As in other occurrences of this canonized figure in Spanish art of the period,[66] it seems impossible to determine which of the many Sts. Gerard was intended (if indeed the donor himself knew!): in the Homar panel he is clad merely in a nondescript monastic habit, and, if the painter meant him to be the brother of St. Bernard, he has been guilty of the same mistake as the Játiva Master[67] in not making this habit Cistercian.

The rights of the St. Felix Master to be taken at least into consideration to father the picture really need little more demonstration than the similarity of the St. Gerard to the St. Vincent Ferrer in the panel of the Barcelona cathedral. Not only is the actual physical type analogous, but there is a like aura of delicate spirituality, perhaps even more etherealized in the figure in the Homar painting. The donor with the St. Quiteria in the cathedral of Tarragona is accommodated to much the same class of humanity. An argument for bringing the Tarragona assistant into the question is provided by the St. Nicholas who is one of those curious forms, bending forward in great, bulky spreads of drapery, illustrated, in the retable of the Tarragona Museum, by the Magdalene in the *Noli me tangere* or the St. Maximin administering to her the last communion; and — a small but significant point — it is to be noted that the heads of St. Nicholas, the Magdalene, and St. Maximin are all pitched up at precisely the same angle. The Madonna's countenance is more than once reflected in the altarpiece at Gerona, and the Child should be compared with the Infant held by the Virgin in the Toreno Collection. I scarcely see how many doubts about the attribution could arise, but in any case they ought to be partially dispelled by the agreement of the picture's appurtenances with practices found in works surely or conditionally assigned to the Master, the haloes of simulated filigree and on the Virgin another example of the fondness for splendid brocades illustrated especially in the dalmatics of the Tarragona St. Stephen and the Barcelona St. Vincent the Martyr.

For an attribution to the St. Felix Master, the evidence is decidedly less concrete and conclusive in the case of a panel of St. John Evangelist that was once to be seen (possibly as a deposit in the civil war) and perhaps still graces the church of S. Félix, Gerona; but, nevertheless, the proposition is worth considering (Fig. 46). Indisputably the modelling of the flesh and of the draperies, as well as the arrangement of the folds, embodies the general, vivid style of the artist. More specifically, the head of the Evangelist closely conforms to a type, with dark hair straggling over the shoulders, that he likes for youths, as, in the Valencian retable, the convert of St. Andrew stemming the fire or the spectator in the left background of the scene of the Apostle outwitting the devil's female disguise. The tresses of St. John should be compared particularly with those of the Beloved Disciple in the Crucifixion of the Provincial Museum, Gerona, and his glance with that of the imprisoned St. Felix in the retable that gives the Master his name. The languid gesture of the Evangelist's right hand is often approximated in the painter's production, being most nearly reproduced in the character from the Old Testament in the compartment at the lower left in the altarpiece of St. Ursula. In the mode illustrated by the panel of St. John, he is fond also of depicting sprouts of plants at one side of the foreground, for instance in the episodes of the dragging of St. Felix or of St. Andrew's flagellation; and there are examples in his output of unostentatious haloes of a single ring such as the one that the Evangelist wears. It would take a painter of the St. Felix Master's conscious artistry to devise so studied a formal composition, in which the verticality of St. John's noble figure is counteracted by the horizontality not only of the huge eagle behind him, his emblem, whose upright claw matches the Evangelist's foot, but also of the extended, stylized foliage of the bush still farther in the rear. Moreover, it is to be remembered that we should have scarcely recognized immediately the single effigy of St. Ursula as the St. Felix Master's work, were it not that we were familiar with narrative panels which once accompanied it and more clearly revealed his manner.

---

[66] Vol. IX, p. 434.

[67] Vol. VI, p. 348.

The potent authority of Ainaud, who follows[68] Angulo in bringing into connection with the St. Felix Master the Madonna and Child in an elaborate landscape belonging to the Museum of Catalan Art, Barcelona, a picture that in volume XI[69] I have ascribed to my Chinchilla Master, forces me to review the whole complicated question. Angulo does not believe the panel a work of the St. Felix Master himself, and I do not understand from Ainaud's words that

---

[68] Unpublished article.

[69] Pp. 110 ff.

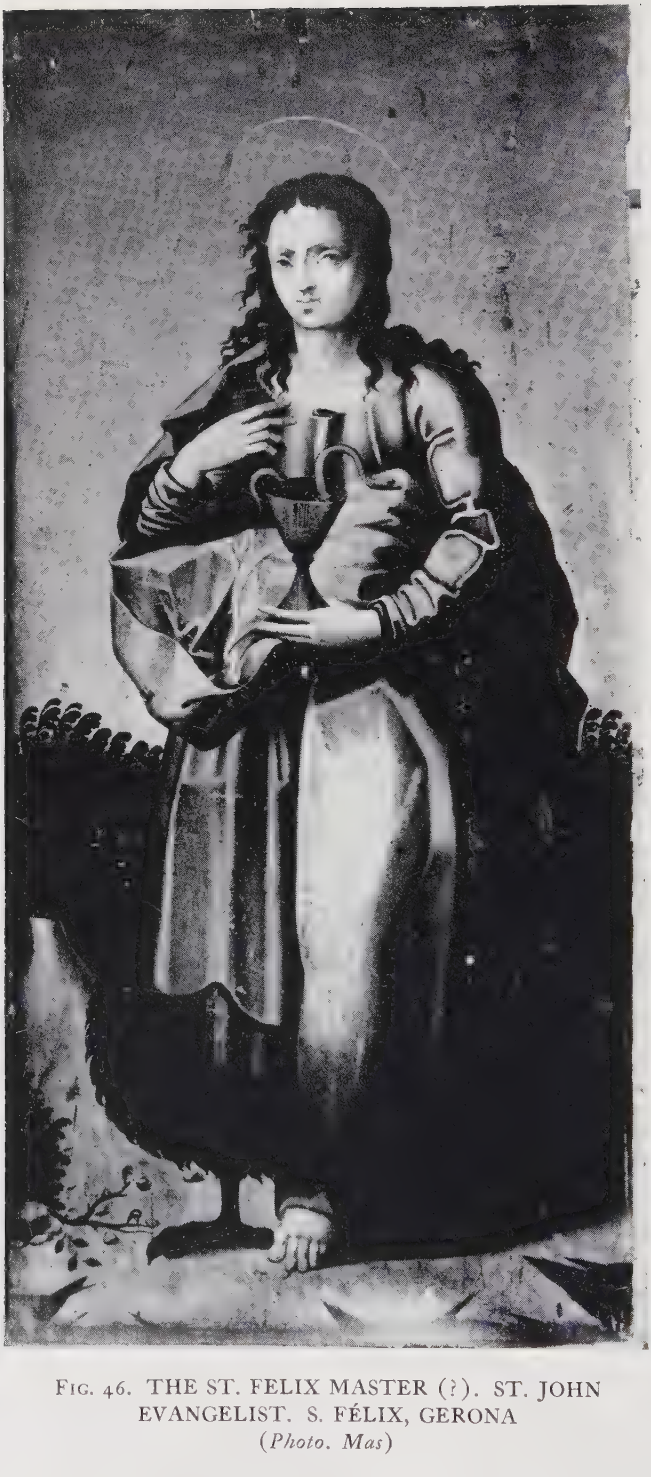

FIG. 46. THE ST. FELIX MASTER (?). ST. JOHN EVANGELIST. S. FÉLIX, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

he would definitely venture this attribution; but my review inclines me more and more to accept it, although I still hesitate to make the ascription unqualified and should wish to place the picture in the large group of paintings of all schools that candid criticism ought, with our present knowledge, to leave as yet in an indeterminate class. In addition to the similarities to the St. Felix Master adduced by Angulo, the perception of Ainaud brings to bear upon the problem two other very significant links: in the representation of the Massacre of the Innocents in the background of the Barcelona picture, the horses of the riders and to some extent the riders themselves duplicate those in the compartment of the dragging of St. Felix by mules in the Gerona retable; and both to the left of the mansion at the right in the landscape behind the Barcelona Madonna and in the episode of tortures in the left background of the scene of St. Felix on the *eculeus* there are introduced figures of orientals. One artist, nevertheless, might have lifted such details from another, and I championed the idea of contacts between the Chinchilla and St. Felix Masters; but the greater likelihood would be that a single painter would repeat himself, and even I can increase the number of bonds that exist between the St. Felix Master and the Barcelona panel. The striped garments on the angels supporting the canopy above the Madonna are a commonplace with the St. Felix Master, as on the Magdalene in the Crucifixion of the Provincial Museum, Gerona, and as in the lateral scenes of the retable of St. Ursula; the small bushes in the distance of the landscape are spotted about in his characteristic fashion; and the St. Joseph in the Flight into Egypt enacted in the background has one of the hawk-like profiles that he is fond of using for older men. The type of the Madonna, the principal figure in the picture, is vaguely approximated here and there in the retable of St. Andrew, but the lack of her real conformity to the St. Felix Master's women is among the factors that give me pause in confidently assigning the Barcelona panel to him.

If we should dare to make this assignment, what are we to do with the other works that I had ascribed to the Chinchilla Master certainly or questionably? In the *Noli me tangere* at Chinchilla, the resemblance to the St. Felix Master in the landscape, its pieces of architecture, its subordinate incidents, and in the north-European flavor in the picture's style are of general nature, but there are few, if any, specific attachments, unless we wish to seize upon a kind of analogy of the Christ to the Saviour in the scene of the washing of the feet in the Tarragona retable. Chinchilla is not very far distant from Orihuela, where we first find Joan de Burgunya: could Joan, if he be the St. Felix Master, have painted in this way before he fully developed his modes? On such a supposition, we should have to dismiss the claims of Pedro Delgado to parity with the Chinchilla Master. The affiliations of the Nativity in the Wakefield-Mori Collection, Monte Carlo, with the St. Felix Master are no more concrete than in the case of the *Noli me tangere,* thus leaving us with the *possibility* that the Chinchilla Master was merely an artist moving in the orbit of the St. Felix Master and that he deserves the credit for the panel in the Barcelona Museum.

CHAPTER V

THE SCHOOL OF THE ST. FELIX MASTER

1. The Catalan Monogrammist (Pedro Mates?)

The circumlocution that I have chosen to designate this competent, fresh, agreeable, but too often uninspired follower of the St. Felix Master is derived from a monogram which he introduced in several of his altarpieces and of which I here reprint (Fig. 47) a number of examples from a plate included in a series of articles [1] by the distinguished scholar, Juan Sutrá y Viñas, to whose discernment we owe the discovery of the painter and the reconstruction of his achievement; but, since no one of the efforts to identify the monogram with the name of an artistic personality is absolutely conclusive, discretion requires the use of the sobriquet that I have set at the beginning of the chapter.

The letters TMAS are clearly woven into the monogram, and Sutrá therefore proposed as one possible elucidation the word *Tomas* (Catalan and Castilian for Thomas) as the Christian name or surname of the Master, especially because the monogram occurs on the halberd carried by an Apostle thought to be St. Thomas in his retable done for the town of Sagaró. Too much stress, however, cannot be laid upon the latter argument, since the halberd is an anomalous emblem for St. Thomas and the underlying inscription that names him, as in the case of the labels of the other Apostles in the Sagaró assemblage, may postdate the paintings. The Spanish scholar was even willing to descry the letter V in the centre of the M, giving TVMAS, in which the V, as not infrequently at the time, would stand for a U, so that we should have the spelling TUMAS for TOMAS. Inasmuch, moreover, as the presumed St. Thomas in the Sagaró altarpiece is a type that reappears in many of the artist's productions, Sutrá guessed that it might be a self-portrait.[2] J. M.

---

[1] *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya,* XLVII (1937), August, October, November, and December.

[2] It seems to me highly questionable whether this recurrent type was intended as a portrait of himself by the Monogrammist, since, as in any artist's works, there are many other types repeated again and again.

Madurell [3] has proposed as a conceivable candidate for identification a painter, Juan Thomás, a citizen of Barcelona, who can be traced from 1508 until his death before 1541; and to the list of such aspirants Angulo [4] has added a T.Mas, known to have been active in the profession at Gerona in the first half of the Cinquecento.

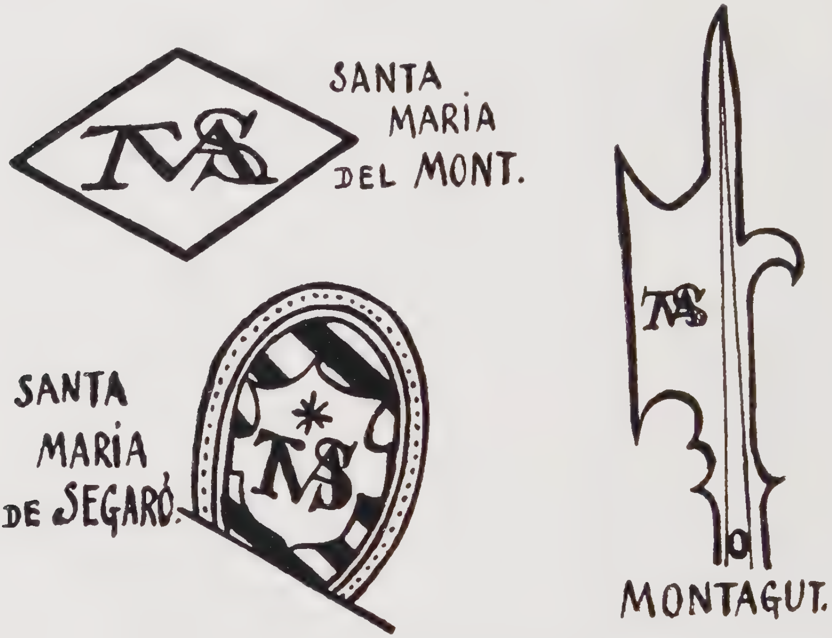
SANTA MARIA DEL MONT.
SANTA MARIA DE SEGARÓ.
MONTAGUT.

Fig. 47. EXAMPLES OF THE MONOGRAM OF THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST
(*From an article by Sutrá*)

Greater probability attaches to Sutrá's second interpretation of the monogram, which indeed has found favor with other Spanish scholars, i.e., that it enshrines the surname Matas or Mates. The central M in the monogram would be taken as the first letter; the T and S would end the word; the A would occupy the second place and could be understood as repeated before the final S, although the last supposition would not be absolutely necessary, since the common Catalan spelling was Mates and since the E or A might be surmised to have been omitted altogether; or the A could be conceived as in its proper spot at the end of MATAS, with the first A left out. The explanation as Matas or Mates would be much less intricate than in many other monograms. Furthermore, in the retable of Sagaró where the monogram twice manifests itself, the appearance also of the simple initial M on the halberd of one of the soldiers in the Resurrection supplies cogent evidence that M in the monogram was meant as the first letter of the concealed signature. St. Bartholomew, in the main panel of the retable dedicated to him once at Llorona, stood on a pavement one of the tiles of which contained the monogram, and in the compartment of this Apostle's exorcism of the princess the letter M was visible on another tile; but no strong argument can be based on the Llorona M, since it was followed by another character that looks like an N. A very persuasive reason for interpreting the name as Mates is that we know of a painter of Gerona, Pedro Mates, who is recorded [5] as having finished in 1532 the now lost retable for the high altar of the great monastery of San Pedro de Rodas in the city's province and who, according to unpublished notices in the Municipal Archives of Gerona adduced by Ainaud,[6] can be traced as resident in the town in the second quarter of the sixteenth century and even as late as 1567. The last dateable work of the Monogrammist is the Baptist's retable of 1536 in the Jover Collection, Barcelona. The Juan Mates who appears in 1577 as a painter originating in Gerona but active in Barcelona [7] and who will concern us in a subsequent volume falls in a period too tardy for identification with the Monogrammist, but he must have belonged to the artistic family of Gerona with this surname, from which Ainaud has unearthed two other members in the second half of the sixteenth century, Nicolás and Damián.[8] In sum, it must be reiterated that the evidence does not yet fully justify the designation of the artist who now concerns us by anything more definite than a pseudonym.

---

[3] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 39 and 47.

[4] *Pintura del Renacimiento*, Madrid, 1954, p. 64: vol. XII in the series *Ars Hispaniae.*

---

[5] F. Monsalvatje y Fossas, *Los monasterios de la Diócesis Gerundense*, Olot, 1904, p. 48. This Pedro Mates cannot be identical with a homonym, also a painter, mentioned at La Seo de Urgel from 1522 until his death in 1530, two years before the activity of the other artist at San Pedro de Rodas: see J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, IV, 3–4 (1946), 362–368.

[6] Article on Catalan painting of the sixteenth century to which I have often had occasion to refer. The Gerona archives of 1568 and 1569 contain puzzling references to a painter and priest, Pedro Mates, whether or not our Master, who in the first instance refused to pay a debt and in the second is described as not present at some legal proceeding.

[7] See J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 47, and II, 3 (1944), 33.

[8] The well known Juan Mates of the early fifteenth century derived from a different part of Catalonia. See vols. IX, p. 750; X, p. 306; and XI, p. 377.

Of the productions securely authenticated by the monogram as a kind of signature, we begin naturally with the specimen that is both the most instructive in regard to the master's various characteristics and one of his most beautiful creations, the retable which from the high altar of the parish church at Montagut, northwest of Gerona, has now entered the Diocesan Museum in the latter place. At the time of my visit to Montagut in 1930, the paintings were built into a structure of the eighteenth century containing at the centre a baroque statue of St. Peter, to whom the church is dedicated, but subsequently, when Sutrá restored the panels, he removed the later settings and devised for the pictures suitable modern frames of the simplest sort. Twelve scenes from the life of St. Peter, some of rare occurrence, are comprised within the cycle. The first three are inspired by the New Testament, his walking over the water to Christ upon the Sea of Tiberias where the other Apostles are fishing, the delivery of the keys, and his great missionary sermon on the day of Pentecost. The fourth also has this source but constitutes the only example of the theme known to me in altarpieces of St. Peter — Ananias, with the help of two servants, spreading out a certain amount of money on a table, while the Apostle, anachronously depicted as already associated with St. Paul, denounces him for lying and secretly withholding the rest of the sum from the infant Church. In the fifth compartment St. Peter, again together with St. Paul, baptizes a noble lady, whom the artist and his patron probably thought to be Cornelia, since in some texts of the *Golden Legend* the feminine "Cornelia" stands, through scribal corruption, for the masculine, Cornelius, the centurion whose conversion by St. Peter is related in the tenth chapter of Acts. The next three scenes are episodes in the Apostle's discomfiture of Simon Magus in the presence of Nero, who is garbed like a Moorish caliph. First, he drives off, with blessed bread, the dogs that Simon had set upon both him and St. Paul (Fig. 48); he then raises a youth from the dead after the miracle could not be performed by Simon, who is depicted as leaving in humiliation the house of mourning; and finally he frustrates the sorcerer's attempt at supernatural flying. The last compartments have to do with his incarceration and death: his conversion, in prison, of his jailers, Processus and Martinianus; the "Quo vadis" incident; his martyrdom on the reversed cross; and

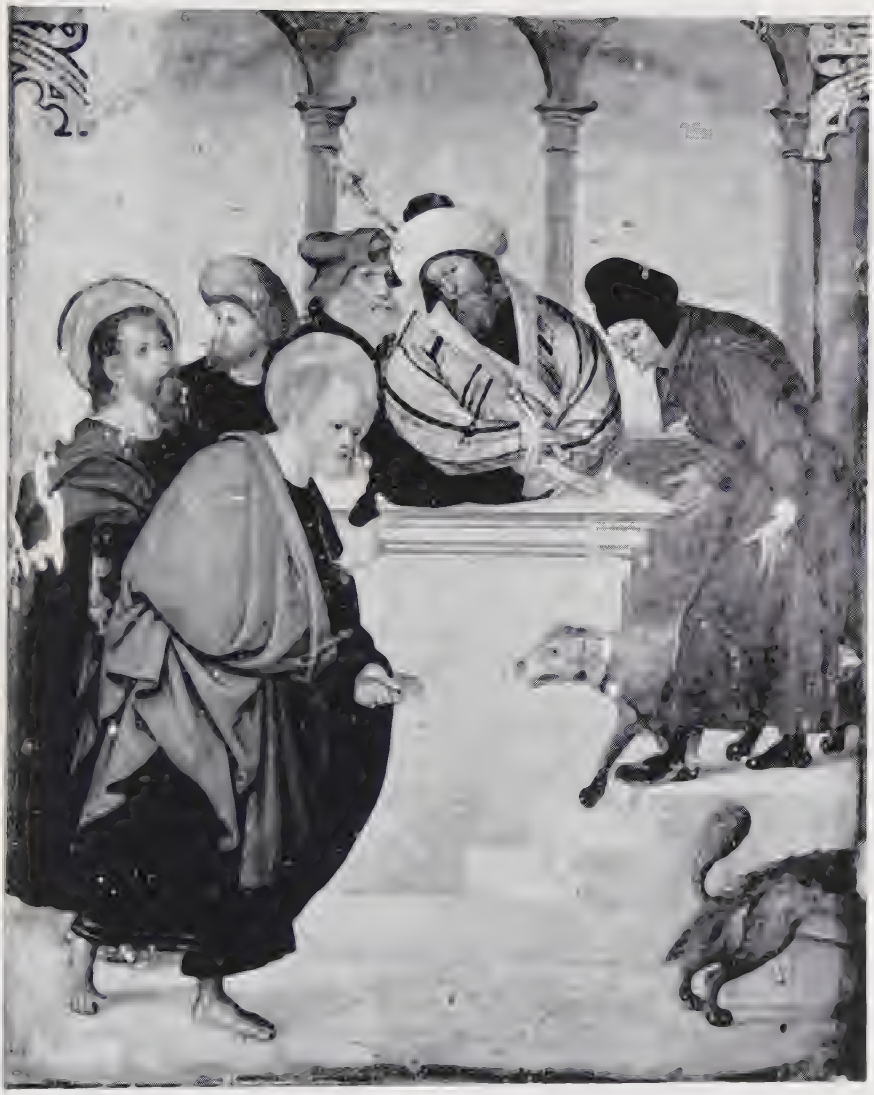

FIG. 48. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. ST. PETER REPELLING THE DOGS OF SIMON MAGUS, SECTION OF RETABLE FROM MONTAGUT. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

(in a ruinous condition) his burial. There is also preserved the surmounting Crucifixion, in which the monogram is inscribed upon the halberd of the soldier at the right.

What the Catalan Monogrammist does is to take the St. Felix Master's style and simplify it with less pretentious and crowded compositions, with less agitated actors, with somewhat less complicated architectural settings, and with little or no leaning towards mannerism. This means that he is not so much of a cosmopolitan as his teacher, but the advantage of his relative provincialism is a greater freshness and a more perceptible tendency to translate his themes into the vivid and colloquial Spanish modes of sacred narrative. His comparative simplicity creates a more obvious resemblance to Juan de Borgoña even than in the case of the St. Felix Master. Within the more modest limits by which he was content to abide, he draws as well as his instructor, bequeathing to us many even memorable figures, such as the guard locking the Apostles' prison or Simon Magus letting loose his hounds. We shall often find him indeed, as in this representation of Simon, achieving quite unexpected realizations of dramatic postures. In the scene of St. Peter's Pentecostal sermon, the second man from the right in the audience illustrates the Monogrammist's custom of constantly introducing into the midst of his agreeable but stock types of humanity figures in whom individualization is carried almost to the point of caricature. The woman who has fallen asleep against St. Peter's pulpit, perhaps suggested by an analogous person in his teacher's representation of St. Felix's homily, constitutes the kind of note of *genre* in which his Spanish directness not infrequently expresses itself. In color he tends more than the St. Felix Master to retain the clear and brilliant tones of mediaeval Catalan painting, but on the other hand, curiously enough, he clings less, despite his provincialism, to the gold appurtenances of the elder generation. There is no extant instance of his substitution of gold, as in the St. Felix Master's retable of St. Andrew, for the heavens, and the limpid blue of his skies is always an entrancing factor in his appeal. He is less addicted to accents of gold in garments and architecture, and, when he does employ the precious material, as in the haloes, its inferior quality betrays that in the Renaissance it no longer interested him as a decorative vehicle.

He is less architecturally minded than the St. Felix Master, and yet he derived from him a very considerable preoccupation with magnificent settings to the narrative. St. Peter's sermon takes place in a stately hall of Renaissance architecture opening at the back into a sort of loggia topped by a coffered ceiling. Like Juan de Borgoña in the fresco of the Purification at Toledo, he places the baptism of Cornelia in a Gothic church in which he simulates a retable over an altar, but he projects right into the middle of the church a grandiose addition of the Renaissance in front of which St. Peter is emphasized by standing. He also makes much of the mediaeval city that is meant to represent Rome in the background of the episode of the "Quo vadis." Continuing the precedent of Bermejo, he is fond of inserting Hebrew inscriptions when there is any justification for them, as upon St. Peter's sarcophagus.[9] Angulo has demonstrated that he followed the St. Felix Master in borrowing details from Dürer, in the Crucifixion, for instance, taking the St. John from the German's engraving of the theme, Bartsch no. 24, and the swooning Virgin, with the holy woman who supports her, from the woodcut of Christ's farewell to His mother in the series of Mary's life. In the setting to the scenes of St. Peter's encounter with the dogs and of his martyrdom, the *motif* of the parapet, with accompanying figures, is derived either from the St. Felix Master or this Master's source in Dürer.[10]

Of the three other retables bearing the monogram, the panels of the small example in the shrine of Nuestra Señora del Mont (on the height above the town of Sagaró, not far from Montagut), which were almost all destroyed in the civil war, had been hung at the time of my visit in 1930 about the walls of the church,[11] but Sutrá has made a logical reconstruction of the altarpiece that, with one exception, I follow. The principal compartment was occupied by a cult-statue of the Madonna that survived the war and still decorates the altar, but the rest consisted of the Monogrammist's paintings. At the sides were the Annunciation, Birth of Christ, Epiphany (these two also having escaped the war's havoc), and Assumption, and above the sculptured effigy the Crucifixion (Fig. 49). The predella comprised half-lengths of sacred personages, St. Lawrence, a canonized bishop, St. Benedict (?), St. Christopher, and, in narrower panels, the mourning Virgin

---

[9] See below, p. 141, n. 20.

[10] See above, p. 99.

[11] Sutrá in a letter kindly suggests to me that the panels may be the remains of a retable from the abandoned monastery of San Lorenzo del Mont at Sous, close to Sagaró, which Monsalvatje (*Noticias históricas*, XVII, 167) states to have been imported into the church of Nuestra Señora del Mont.

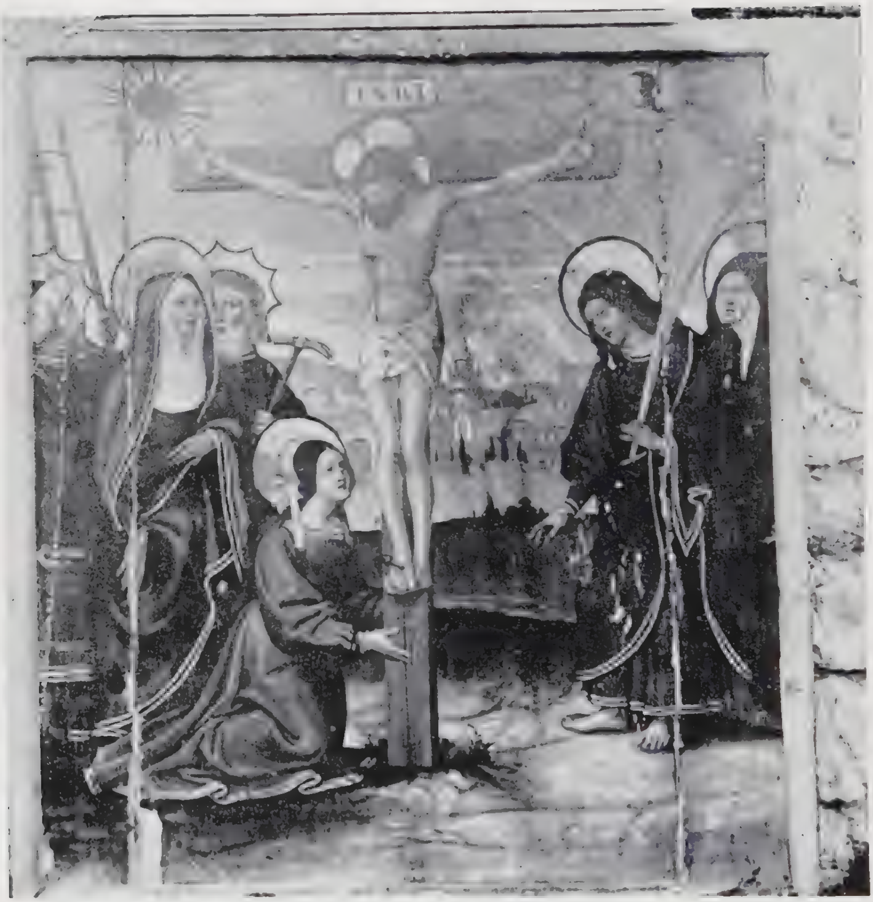

Fig. 49. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. CRUCIFIXION, SECTION OF RETABLE. NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL MONT, NEAR SAGARÓ

and St. John Evangelist who must originally have flanked the tabernacle which would have been decorated with a figure of the dead Christ. Sutrá describes the last two forms merely as a feminine saint and a masculine martyr, failing to realize that St. John Evangelist often carries the palm because of his acceptance of the martyrdom in oil from which he was rescued; and he places them at the ends of the predella. The monogram was introduced into tiles of the pavement both in the Annunciation and Epiphany.

The quality of the craft was not as high as in the Montagut altarpiece, suggesting that the Monogrammist refused to exert himself so much in an order for a little rural sanctuary or that he left largely to helpers the execution of his designs. He had less scope in the panels for the exercise of his architectural proclivities than at Montagut, but he did not refrain entirely from exhibiting them, as especially in the sections of the ruined edifice in the Nativity, where through an arch could be discerned one of those inner chambers that piqued the St. Felix Master's interest in problems of a space within a space. Possibly there was more from his own brush in the Nativity than elsewhere in the retable, for he would scarcely have left to an assistant the charming little accents of birds perched on the wall and fluttering in the sky. In the Crucifixion, probably at the request of his patron, he retained what must have been then antiquated elements in the iconography of the theme, the sun and moon.

Practically the same statements in regard to quality and to the extent of the Monogrammist's participation in the actual execution apply to the retable of the *parroquia* of Sta. María at Sagaró itself, the sections of which used to be scattered about the church and in the rector's house but, with the exception of panels of the Apostles all but two of which have disappeared from our ken, are now preserved in the Diocesan Museum at Gerona. The church at Sagaró still harbors the pair of Apostles that have survived, Sts. Thomas and Paul. All the narrative panels are of the same height, but two of them are broader than the others and may have been set in the centre of the structure as depicting the beginning and the end of the divine dispensation. The first displays the Eternal Father blessing His creation and seeing that "it was good." The details of the cosmos included in the picture are the sun, with its rays, prominently conventionalized into a geometric pattern in the middle of the background, the sea and the dry land, the trees and plants, a most varied menagerie of the beasts of the earth (in which the Monogrammist shows himself a better delineator of birds and reptiles than of quadrupeds), and finally Adam and Eve, anachronously wearing already their aprons of fig leaves. The second of the two larger compartments is the Last Judgment, in which there are no iconographic peculiarities except the contents of St. Michael's scales, a soul in one pan and a book (the record of his life?) in the other. Ordinarily the balances hold a redeemed and a damned soul, but Émile Mâle [12] stresses the latitude permitted in the scales and the frequent, odd departures from the norm. The narrower panels comprise eight, instead of the usual seven, Joys of Mary, the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection (Fig. 50), Ascension, Pentecost, Assumption, and Coronation (with the Virgin and Our Lord seated on as luxuriant a throne of the Renaissance as any cultivated by Pedro Berruguete). When the themes duplicate those of Nuestra Señora del Mont, the compositions are but slightly varied. From the assemblage there were known until recently also panels of the twelve Apostles, those of Sts. Peter, Paul, Andrew, and Thomas higher and less wide than the compartments of the eight others.

The monogram occurred on the halberd of St. Thomas and the shield of one of the soldiers in the Resurrection, but we have already [13] had occasion to note the significance of the fact that another soldier's halberd, lying on the ground, is marked simply with the letter M. Whereas the St. Felix Master and the Monogrammist usually take only details from Dürer, the whole composition of the Resurrection is here lifted from the version in the Large Passion, thus supplying the painter with the highly individualized and powerfully rendered, sleeping soldier at the right, whose halberd we have just mentioned and who punctuates the groups of generalized types in the Sagaró altarpiece, relieving the dull average with which in this assemblage the author contented himself.

The panels of the last of the retables showing the monogram were once distributed about the parish church at Llorona, in the same region of the province of Gerona as the other works by the master that we have studied, but they too constitute one of the many Catalan sacrifices to the civil strife of the late thirties of the present century. The saint honored in the retable was Bartholomew, and, although St.

---

[12] *L'art religieux du XIII^e siècle en France*, chapter VI, part II.

[13] See above, p. 125.

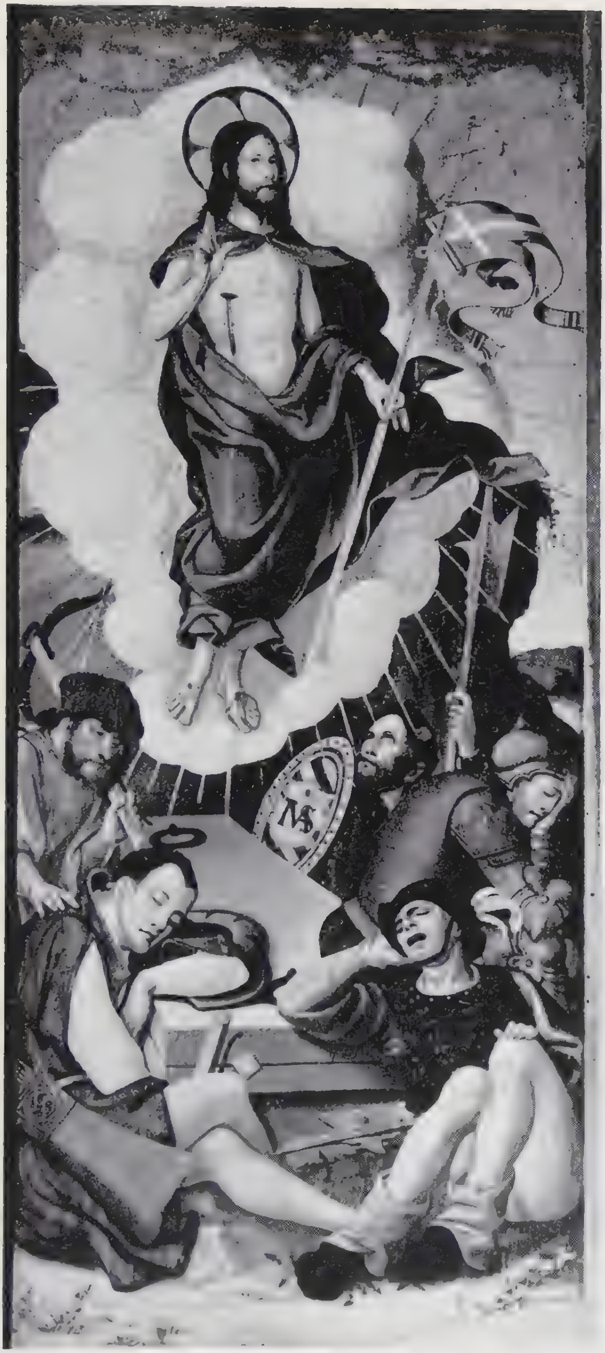

FIG. 50. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. RESURRECTION, SECTION OF RETABLE FROM SAGARÓ. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Andrew is the patron of the parish, Sutrá [14] has found records of the fervid cult that St. Bartholomew enjoyed in the church and surrounding country from the Middle Ages onward and of his altar in the edifice that was an object of great devotion. In accordance with the demands of this cult a confraternity of St. Bartholomew was established at Llorona on July 29, 1562, too late a date, however, for the style of the retable which must have been already in place. The compartments from the body of the retable were all preserved until 1936. The effigy of St. Bartholomew in the principal compartment stood against one of the formal, brocaded plaques of the mediaeval school, and it was in the pavement beneath him that the painter set the monogram. The central pinnacle contained its customary theme, the Crucifixion, reduced to the figures of Christ, the Virgin, and St. John. The four lateral, narrative compartments depicted: St. Bartholomew effecting his cures in the temple of the god Astaroth (Fig. 51); his exorcism of King Polemius's daughter (with the letter M, followed by another character, set into one of the tiles of the pavement [15]); a very mild version of the flaying in comparison with the usual drastic Spanish treatments of the revolting theme; but, as if to make up for this restraint, a most violent and sanguinary conception of the Apostle's ultimate decapitation. The Llorona retable, although a quite acceptable piece of craft, provided yet another instance either of the Monogrammist's failure to put forth his best efforts and real capabilities for an inconspicuous undertaking or of his consignment of much of the execution to assistants.

There next fall within our survey the works in which, though not marked by the monogram, Sutrá has rightly recognized the Monogrammist's hand. To the same class of rather mediocre productions as the assemblages of Nuestra Señora del Mont, Sagaró, and Llorona belonged a monument of painting that was one of the most serious losses suffered by Spanish art in the holocausts of 1936, the retable over the high altar of the church at Molló, in the mountains above Camprodón in the extreme northwestern part of the province of Gerona, close to the French border. Fortunately photographs of the retable had previously been made — of the whole by the Mas Archive and of two details of the predella by Sutrá (Fig. 52); and both he and I had enjoyed the privilege of visiting the church before the con-

---

[14] *Op. cit.*, December, 1937, pp. 279–281.

[15] See above, p. 125.

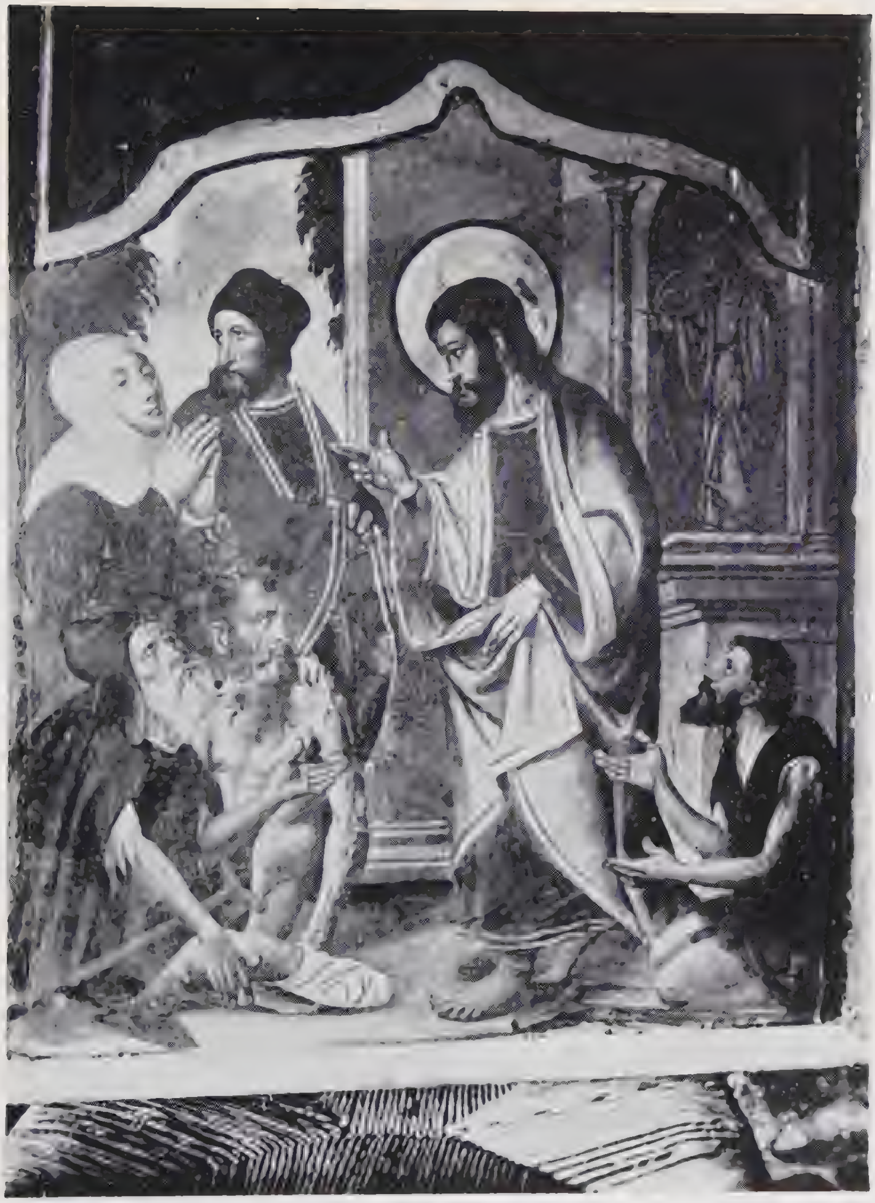

Fig. 51. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. ST. BARTHOLOMEW HEALING, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, LLORONA

(*Photo. Sutrá*)

flagration. Nevertheless, the monument had not survived even until 1936 quite unaltered. Probably at the date set at the top, 1727, additions were made to the retable at the extreme outer sides, or at least older parts at these points were repainted; and the sections by the Monogrammist remaining in their pristine condition and with their original Plateresque frames were, first, the twelve lateral compartments *immediately* adjoining the structure's centre, representing scenes from the story of St. Cecilia, to whom the church is dedicated, and, secondly, five half-lengths of saints in the predella, the sixth piece having been burned early in the present century during an Easter service. In the Crucifixion, set above the more modern statue of St. Cecilia at the retable's centre and constituting a simplified version of the example from Montagut, the Monogrammist's hand can easily be discerned under a total repainting.

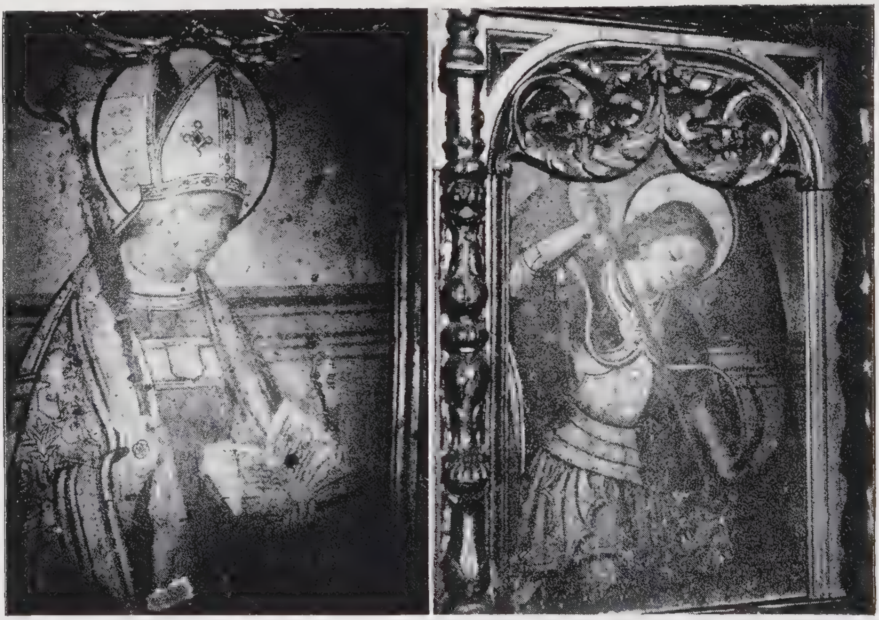

FIG. 52. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. CANONIZED BISHOP AND ST. MICHAEL, SECTIONS OF PREDELLA OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, MOLLÓ
(*Photo. Sutrá*)

Sutrá [16] has correctly designated the themes from the life of St.

---

[16] *Op. cit.*, December, 1937, pp. 282–284.

Cecilia, which, as so often in the Monogrammist's output by reason of the rarity of the subjects that he depicts, added iconographical interest to his intrinsic merits. The four vertical divisions of three compartments each could scarcely have come down to us in their original arrangement, for the narrative began at the right of the middle section, then passed to a pair of strips at the left, and finally returned to the extreme right. First, St. Cecilia on her wedding night was depicted as telling her spouse, St. Valerian, of her companion, the angel, who, though he was introduced into the panel, must have been considered, according to the letter of the story, as still invisible to her husband. Next, St. Valerian, in the presence of the pope, St. Urban, was converted by the apparition of an old man holding a book inscribed with the verses from Ephesians IV, 5–6, setting forth the unity of the Christian faith; he was baptized; and his wife and he received from the angel the two floral crowns. Tiburtius, St. Valerian's brother, was then seen as converted by the young married couple (with a slight departure from the ordinary form of the story in that the colloquy was conceived as occurring, not in the chamber where they had been crowned, but in a dining room); he also was next represented as being christened; in company with St. Valerian and his sister-in-law he likewise enjoyed the angelic visitations; the two brothers distributed their possessions to the poor; they were arraigned before the Roman prefect, Almachius; in prison they received comfort from St. Cecilia just before their execution; and their decapitation was treated in quite as gruesome a fashion as that of St. Bartholomew at Llorona. The final scene in the narrative was the ineffectual attempt to destroy St. Cecilia in boiling water. The five original saints preserved in the predella were a canonized bishop, Catherine of Alexandria, Michael, Barbara, and Roch; and it was in the compartment nearest the tabernacle at the right that a modern St. Joseph was substituted for the piece destroyed at Easter. I am ashamed that at my stay in Molló I failed to see the likewise now destroyed Coronation of the Virgin in the sacristy which Sutrá records as a repainted achievement of our master's brush.

A higher degree of artistic attainment, equal or superior to that which the Monogrammist exhibited at Montagut, is incorporated in eleven panels from a retable of St. John Baptist the original location of which has not been discovered but which, once in the Estruch Collection at Barcelona, were eventually found by Sutrá in the Collection of Don José Jover in the same city. In addition to the Crucifixion, which surmounted the retable and is practically a replica of the rendering at Montagut, there are preserved ten scenes from the Baptist's story. The beginning of the cycle, the annunciation to Zacharias, at once reveals the more careful craftsmanship; and the architectural studies that we have observed at Montagut are paralleled not only in the grandiose altar at which Zacharias kneels before the handsome angel but also in the introduction of arcading in the right background as if a part of the Temple. Similar but more complicated arcading occurs in the St. Felix Master's representation of St. Andrew exorcising the dogs. It is in the tabernacle above the altar that the date 1536 is inscribed.[17] Then follow the regular constituents of the Baptist's cycle, the visitation, nativity of St. John (with the Virgin as usual holding the newborn child), the declaration of his son's name by Zacharias, the baptism of Christ, and St. John denouncing Herod's marriage in the presence of the sinning royal couple (again with an extended architectural perspective). We note in this and in the Monogrammist's other retables that he was hard pressed to find enough events in the sacred stories to fill the numerous compartments of the sort of structures demanded of him; and in the Jover assemblage he inserts an episode not commonly represented, two of the Baptist's disciples (here depicted as haloed) reporting to him in prison on the great and good deeds of the Saviour. The final scenes are the decapitation (as bloody as the master's other treatments of such martyrdoms), Salome's presentation of the head, and — the only occurrence of the theme in art that I can recall — the burning of the Baptist's bones at the order of Julian the Apostate (Fig. 53).

Sutrá[18] attributes to the Monogrammist the panels of a retable dedicated to the Magdalene that once adorned her altar (now called the altar of the Merced) in the cathedral of Gerona but have long been known as consigned to the Salas Capitulares of the church, and yet he is so troubled by the different and better quality, in comparison with the artist's other works, that he is not quite satisfied by interpreting the style "as a culminating phase in the production of our painter" but wonders if we are not in the presence of a colleague.

---

[17] See above, p. 125.

[18] *Op. cit.*, November, 1937, pp. 249–251.

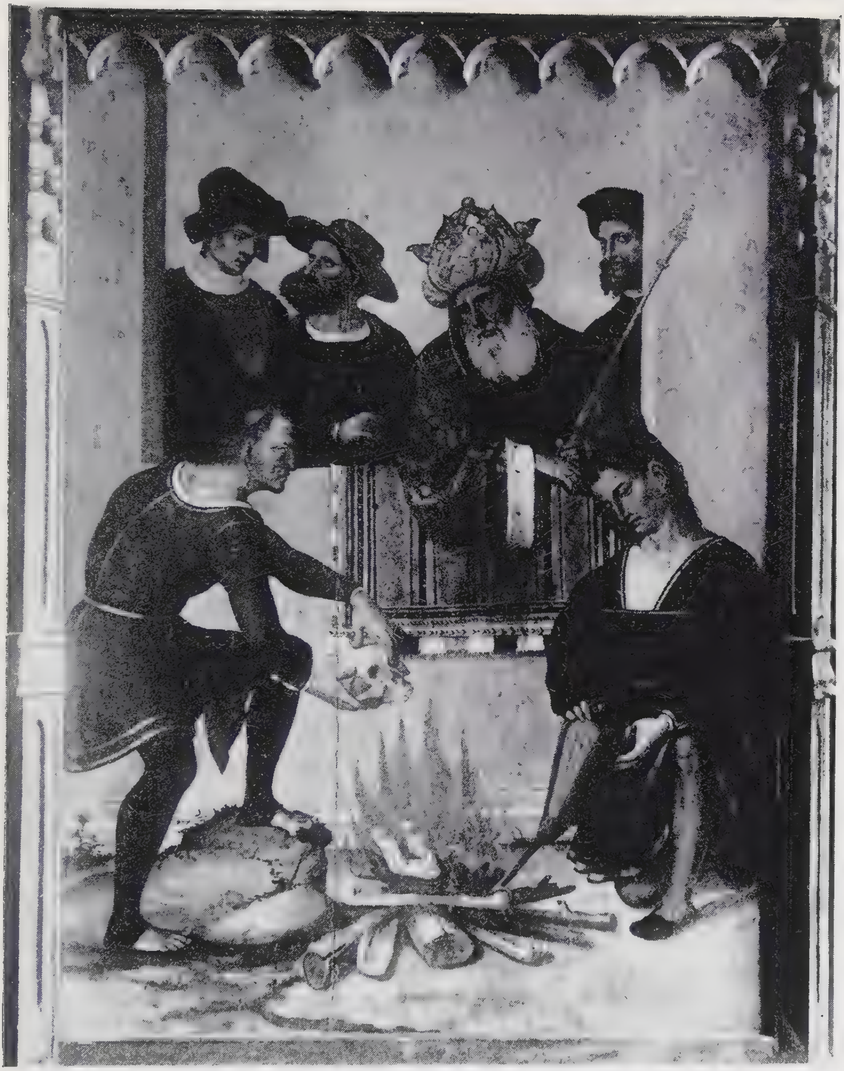

Fig. 53. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. THE BURNING OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S BONES, SECTION OF RETABLE. JOVER COLLECTION, BARCELONA

(Photo. Vidal)

I myself have been so struck by the superiority of the retable that I used to ponder the question whether it might not have been one of the St. Felix Master's commissions in which he was liberally assisted by the Monogrammist, but I have finally convinced myself that its simpler modes, particularly the compositions and the absence of mannered agitation, proclaim it a work of the latter artist, in which he put forth his best effort or benefited in certain passages by the St. Felix Master's aid. We shall find that the retable twice bears the date 1526.

Whether its centre was occupied by a sculptured or painted effigy of the Magdalene, it has been lost, and, besides the Crucifixion, only eight narrative panels are left to us. The subject of the first is rather perplexing, but Sutrá is surely right in describing it as a mere crystallization of the fact that the Magdalene listened to sermons of the Redeemer, i.e., a representation of the sentence in the *Golden Legend,* "And when our Lord Jesus Christ preached there (at Magdalum) and in other places, she was inspired with the Holy Ghost." Christ delivers his exhortation from an elevated throne at the right, with the Apostles just behind Him and with a group of listening Jews at the left to the rear of a parapet, among them one with a Hebrew inscription on his hat probably in order to designate a Pharisee.[19] The Magdalene herself emerges prominently in a galaxy of seated ladies in the left foreground, without a halo as not yet entirely converted and with her worldliness signified by one of the Master's brilliantly striped dresses and by a fan like that of Titian's Lavinia at Dresden. Beside her sits a haloed woman who must be her sister St. Martha and who appears in like, plain garb in other panels in the series, but her introduction at this point in the story should probably be ascribed to the artist's or his patron's invention, since I can find no hagiological authority for St. Martha's coöperation in the Magdalene's regeneration. The next two scenes, the Magdalene washing Our Lord's feet in the house of Simon (Fig. 54) and the resurrection of Lazarus, are entirely original in composition, as if the artist had seen no previous representations of the themes. The locality in Simon's house is not the customary palatial hall but a dining room in a residence of the middle class, and it is on the fireplace in the room that the date 1526 is inscribed. The tomb from which Lazarus issues, also bears this date, as well as one of the Hebrew inscriptions much affected by the Catalan Monogrammist.[20]

---

[19] See above, p. 129, and also the note on the sentence at the end of the present paragraph.

The other five panels relate the Magdalene's experiences in Provence. The prince of the country (clad as a Moor) and his consort listen to her Christian homilies immediately upon her arrival at Marseilles in a scene in which, with the Master's tendency to follow the letter of the sacred tales, she is accompanied by all the personages mentioned in the *Golden Legend,* Martha, Marcella (the serving-woman of the sisters), Lazarus, Maximin (already vested as the bishop of Marseilles), and Cedonius (who had been restored to sight by Christ and is here depicted as a Raphaelesque youth). Next she makes the sign of the cross over the ruler and his wife as they set forth on the voyage to Rome to find whether her preaching agrees with the doctrine of St. Peter (or perhaps she is blessing them on their return), while in small scale in the background is enacted a subordinate episode in the story, the young child, who had been left to die with his deceased mother, the princess, upon a rocky island, running away in fear from the mariners of the ship of his father, who, on his way back from the long Roman pilgrimage, discovers that his son miraculously has been preserved and his wife resuscitated through the efficacy of the Magdalene's intercession. We probably ought to describe as merely fortuitous the resemblances in this compartment to Carpaccio's cycle of St. Ursula — the vessels upon the sea and the brightly decked, gondola-like boat waiting with its dapper punter and guard and with its already embarked pilgrims to receive the sovereign and his lady. The last three scenes are those regularly included in cycles from the Magdalene's life, the hermit's vision of her levitation in the arms of angels, her last communion at the hands of St. Maximin, and her interment. At the ends of the compartments of the Magdalene's sermon at Marseilles and of her burial are preserved bits of an Entombment of Christ, the figures of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea in the former instance and of two sorrowing holy women in the latter, so that between the pair of events

---

[20] The eminent Hebrew scholar, Professor H. A. Wolfson of Harvard, has kindly examined for me this and the Catalan Monogrammist's other Semitic inscriptions. On the lower line of the one on Lazarus's tomb he believes that the words, "sacred sarcophagus" might be read; but he makes nothing certain of the upper line or of the examples in the master's other works, which are muddled through the inscriber's ignorance or through "restoration," and, if Professor Wolfson is unable to decipher them, I am sure that no one else can.

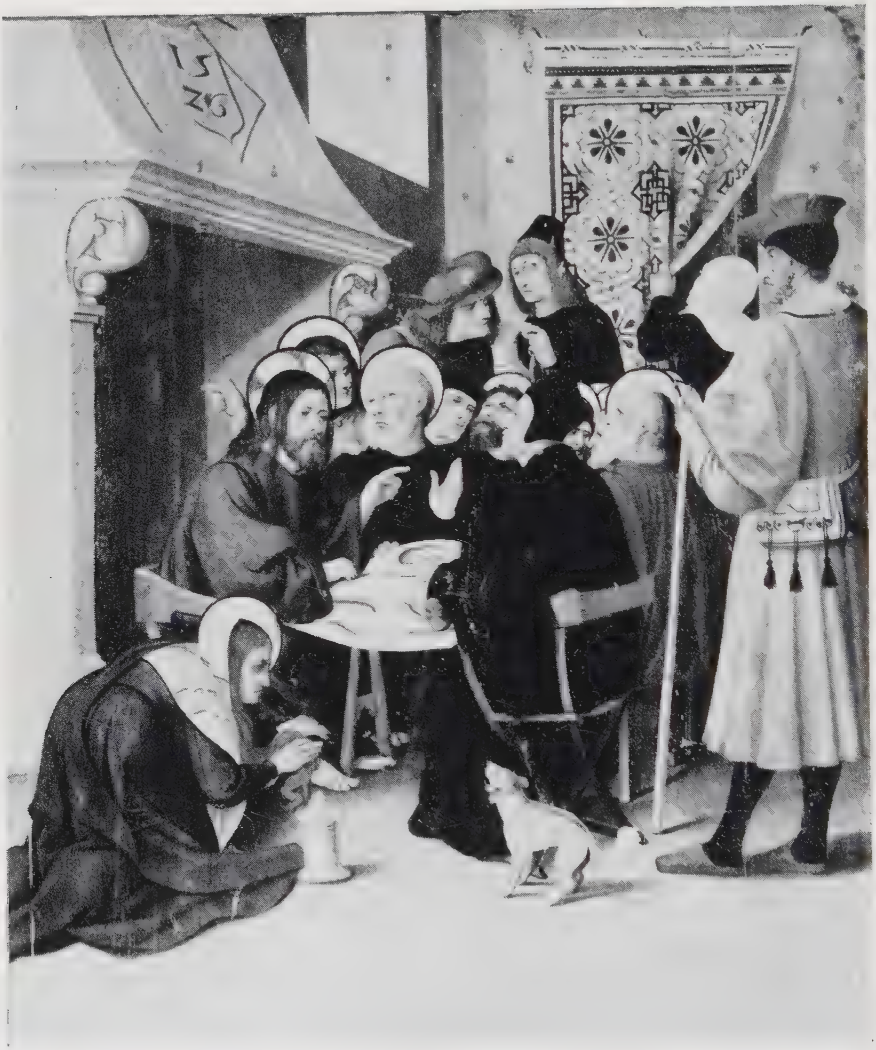

Fig. 54. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. THE MAGDALENE WASHING CHRIST'S FEET. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

from her story the Entombment must have intervened in a kind of predella.

Generally speaking, the compositions fall within the dullness of the Monogrammist's routine. Such, for instance, are the scenes of the Magdalene listening to Christ's exhortations and the resurrection of Lazarus, in the mode of the older Catalan school with a mere alignment of the Apostles and onlookers like a Greek chorus behind the principal actors. In the background of the former compartment, however, the elaboration in the study of the urban street accords rather with the St. Felix Master's initiative than with the Monogrammist's conservatism; and in the latter case, in agreement with the St. Felix Master's habit of bringing in as many details of a story as possible, the Lord's command, "Loose him, and let him go," is materialized in the representation of Sts. Peter and John intent upon unbinding the grave clothes. The only composition of any real interest in its arrangement occurs in the panel of the Magdalene washing the Saviour's feet, which, furthermore, is so advanced in general character as to suggest the possibility of the St. Felix Master's collaboration at this point. The Magdalene herself displays one of this Master's facial types treated with a *sfumatezza* that suggests Romanino, and the spectator carrying a staff at the right is marked by a sharp manneristic profile. The scene includes a striking piece of *genre*, a woman (Simon's wife?) lifting a brilliant curtain at the back of the room to peer into a cupboard in search of some article of food or drink, and this curtain comprises in its patterns stars of Moorish design like those upon the orphreys of St. Felix's dalmatic and like the examples that the Monogrammist sometimes employs in costumes. The charm and skill with which Simon's little dog is rendered cannot be paralleled in the Monogrammist's ordinary output but constitute, as we have seen above, one of the St. Felix Master's distinctive qualities.

The interment of the Magdalene provides a further, very tangible instance in which the forms have progressed towards a greater modernism than the Monogrammist usually attained. Particularly impressive from this standpoint are the deacons assisting St. Maximin in the obsequies, and, again with a touch like that of Romanino, the young acolyte at the extreme right. The deacon who holds the lower end of the shroud is an arrestingly naturalistic figure, even prophetic of Velázquez, and the Magdalene's body is so disposed as, already in the spirit of the Spanish seventeenth century, to permit a realistic study of the soles of her feet. Another finely executed cleric of this class, now with much of the inner fervor of the seventeenth century, bows in adoration beside St. Maximin in the scene of the Magdalene's last communion. Both the burial and the communion are conceived as taking place in the same church, decorated with a simulated triptych of the Passion. Naturalistic detail in the funeral is carried to the point of inscribing the liturgical book from which St. Maximin reads with two very legible collects of the Magdalene's feast and a hymn in her honor.[21] In the representation of young persons and angels the Monogrammist often successfully cultivated an ideal beauty, but he never painted lovelier creatures than those who uplift the Magdalene in her ecstasy.

In the scene of the Magdalene listening to the Saviour's discourse, Angulo[22] has again discovered minor elements lifted from Dürer, the parapet in the background, with spectators standing behind and lolling upon it, derived from the woodcut of St. John's boiling in oil in the Apocalyptic series, and the so-called Pharisee in the midst of this crowd copied, even in the Hebrew inscription upon his hat, from one of the onlookers in the engraving of 1513 representing Sts. Peter and John healing the cripple.

The sections of still another retable in which the Catalan Monogrammist closely approximates the achievement of the St. Felix Master, in this case especially in a partial adoption of mannerism, were all to be seen, before the civil war, in the chapel of Don Domingo de Gomar, Marqués de Millás, in his estate just east of Gerona at Millás, near Madremaña, but they are now divided between this chapel and the Diocesan Museum at Gerona. The recipients of sacred honor are the Cordovan martyrs who enjoyed such extraordinary popularity in Catalonia, St. Acisclus and his sister, St. Victoria, so that very probably the retable was originally done for the chapel, which is dedicated to them.[23] The panels in the Gerona Museum comprise: the principal compartment, in which the paired effigies still stand, as in the mediaeval school, against the rigid and formal expanse of a gorgeous fabric, that here seems to be a hanging rug; and the capping Crucifixion, very like several other versions of the theme by the Monogrammist. The Marqués de Millás possesses the four, lateral narrative scenes, all horizontal compartments like some of those in the retable of the Magdalene and originally flanking the central effigies in two tiers that were separated from each other by frames of which only the spaces now remain. The panel at the upper left depicts the denunciation of the worship of idols by St. Victoria accompanied by her brother, but the three other compartments are devoted to their sufferings, which were so horribly long and varied that our artist was able to select different ones from those depicted in the Franco-Gothic antependium in the Soler y March Collection at Barcelona.[24] At the lower left, St. Acisclus is flogged, and by his side St. Victoria endures the excruciating torture of the soles of her feet that is definitely specified in the accounts of their martyrdom. The panel at the upper right shows her breasts being amputated by an atrocious device operated through cords, while an angel comforts her brother in prison (Fig. 55). Finally, at the lower right, in accordance with a velleity for the sanguinary equal to that which we have already stigmatized in the St. Felix Master, Victoria, displaying the gushing wounds on her bosom, is slain by arrows as she looks at the decapitated trunk of Acisclus and his severed head uplifted by the executioner, with both these parts of his body spurting and dripping gore. If there were once other panels at the sides of the Crucifixion, which exhibits a height only a little less than the compartment of the coupled effigies, and if the structure possessed the usual predella, these sections have not been preserved.

---

[21] They are not collects in the modern missal or breviary for her day, and I have not found their source nor that of the hymn. The first collect begins, "Omnipotens sempiterne Deus qui hodierna (*sic*) die beatam Magdalenam de carnis ergastulo eduxisti," and the second, "Deus qui beatae Mariae Magdalenae penitentias." The verses of the hymn commence with the word, "Gaude," and give the reasons why she should rejoice.

[22] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 328.

[23] For the bibliography of their stories and their Catalan cult, see my volumes IV, p. 503, VI, p. 491, and VII, p. 178. I take it that it is to these paintings that Angulo refers when registering a retable of "Sts. Sebastian and Christina" by our Master in the Diocesan Museum of Gerona (*Archivo español de arte*, XVII, 1944,

The more mannered phase of the painter's production is signalized by such a figure as the guard keeping watch upon Acisclus in prison. In the guard's dog, he does not appear to have exerted the proficiency that this animal stimulated the St. Felix Master to manifest. The martyr's persecutor, Dion, as generally in his and his teacher's repre

---

p. 329, n. 1). The tireless investigations of Don Juan Sutrá have discovered that the pieces at Gerona and Millás once constituted a single *ensemble*, and with his habitual kindness he shared with me the results of this research before he published his illuminating article on the retable, with further information about the Catalan cult of the two martyrs, in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*, 1950, pp. 183–190.

[24] Vol. IV, pp. 503–504.

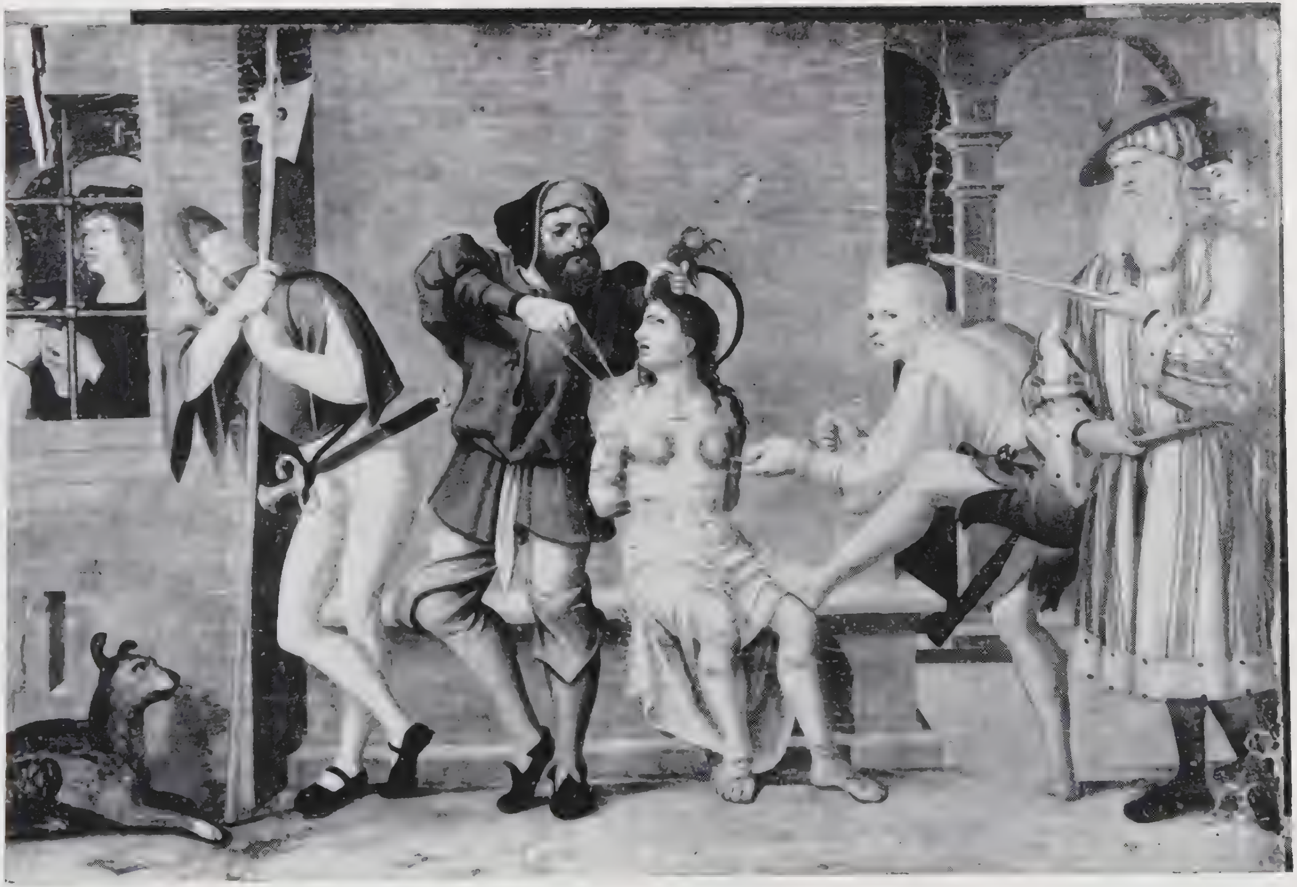

FIG. 55. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. THE AMPUTATION OF ST. VICTORIA'S BREASTS, SECTION OF RETABLE. COLLECTION OF THE MARQUÉS DE MILLÁS AT MILLÁS
(*Photo. Mas*)

sentations of pagan potentates, is conceived as a Moor, and he wears one of the brilliantly striped costumes that both artists affected. With his habitual acumen, Ainaud [25] has recognized that the young man with a staff at the extreme right in the scene of the denunciation of the idol is taken over from the similarly placed figure in Anye Bru's martyrdom of St. Cucufas, thus witnessing, as does the Monogrammist's instructor,[26] to the tremendous stir that the German's retable at San Cugat del Vallés made in the aesthetic atmosphere of Catalonia.

In 1937 [27] Sutrá mentioned a retable of St. Peter as once but no longer in the parish church dedicated to this Apostle at Lligordá, near Sagaró, in the region where the Catalan Monogrammist was so much patronized, and, although he had never seen the retable, he guessed, from what information he could gather in regard to the paintings, that they were stylistically very similar to the Sagaró series. Subsequently, as he has informed me in letters with his usual generosity, he found that the retable had passed into the possession of the Marqués de Montsolís to decorate the chapel in his house at San Hilario de Sacalm (also in the province of Gerona) but that it there perished in the revolutionary disturbances of 1936, leaving no trace except a photograph, taken long ago by the Mas Archive, of a panel of St. Michael which constituted one of the doors at the side of the altar, balanced on the other side by a no longer extant St. Paul. The deductions of Sutrá, however, in regard to the authorship are confirmed by the photograph, in which Angulo [28] also rightly detected the Catalan Monogrammist's hand. The figure of the archangel, indeed, resembles closely the representations of St. Michael in the Sagaró Last Judgment and in the Molló predella.

Recently it has been generally and justly recognized that the Monogrammist was responsible for a run-of-the-mine work in the church of S. Esteban, Bañolas, a large [29] Pietà between the standing effigies of St. Gregory the Great and St. Baudelius, beneath whom kneels a clerical donor (Fig. 56). Like the version by Bermejo in the cathedral of Barcelona, the painting constitutes by itself a whole altarpiece except for a *remate* of St. Veronica spreading forth the cloth with the face of Christ, flanked by two representations of an unknown escutcheon, and except for the possibility of a no longer attached predella. The lateral *guardapolvos* are embellished only with pure design. St. Gregory has his regular emblems of the papal tiara and, as sacred doctor, the rays illuminating a miniature ecclesiastical edifice, but there is the further specification of an inscription of his name on the ground under him; and St. Baudelius of Nîmes, who enjoyed a cult in certain regions of Catalonia and was sometimes, as in the picture, conceived to have been a bishop,[30] is also designated beneath by one of the Catalan forms of his appellation, San Baldiri. Sutrá in a letter kindly informs me that the left half of the escutcheon, with the white cross, might be that of the San Martí family, who were prominent in the annals of the diocese of Gerona. The donor, whoever he may be, the only essay at portraiture in the Master's extant production, does not rise above his customary attainments.

---

[25] *Op. cit.*

[26] See above, p. 86.

[27] *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya*, XLVII, 176–177.

[28] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 329, n. 1.

[29] The dimensions are 1.195 metres in width by 1.065 in height.

From the Casa Misión at Bañolas attached to the church of S. Esteban, there have entered the Diocesan Museum, Gerona, four pictures that look as if they might come from a predella which possibly belonged to the retable of the Pietà, since they are small enough to have been aligned within its breadth. Depicted in half length, they consist of vertical panels of Sts. Eutropius[31] and Ferreolus[32] and of horizontal representations of the Via Dolorosa and St. Barbara in a landscape. A Christ (of the Mass of St. Gregory) with which the Valls Collection has provided the Museum might originally have been comprised in the set as a centre, in case it could be found to have had the same ultimate provenience. If a single predella included all these paintings by the Monogrammist, it would have contained, as sometimes happens, sections directed both upwards and sideways. The hypothesis of the predella's connection with the retable of the Pietà is seriously damaged by the existence, in the Museum, of a large[33] panel stated to derive also from the Casa Misión, Bañolas, but surely not a part of a predella and perhaps once a section of a *guardapolvo*, whereas the retable already possesses its own pieces of this sort. The sub-

---

[30] A. V. Domenec, *Historia general de los santos y varones ilustres en santidad del principado de Cataluña*, Gerona, 1630, p. 109.

[31] Accompanied by the inscription of his name in the Catalan form, *Itrop*. Of the several canonized personages thus called, he is probably the Spanish monk of the sixth century who eventually became bishop of Valencia and by whom two epistles are preserved.

[32] In Catalan, Ferreol, a martyred Roman tribune honored in Catalonia: see A. V. Domenec, *op. cit.*, 178.

[33] The height is 1.35 metres.

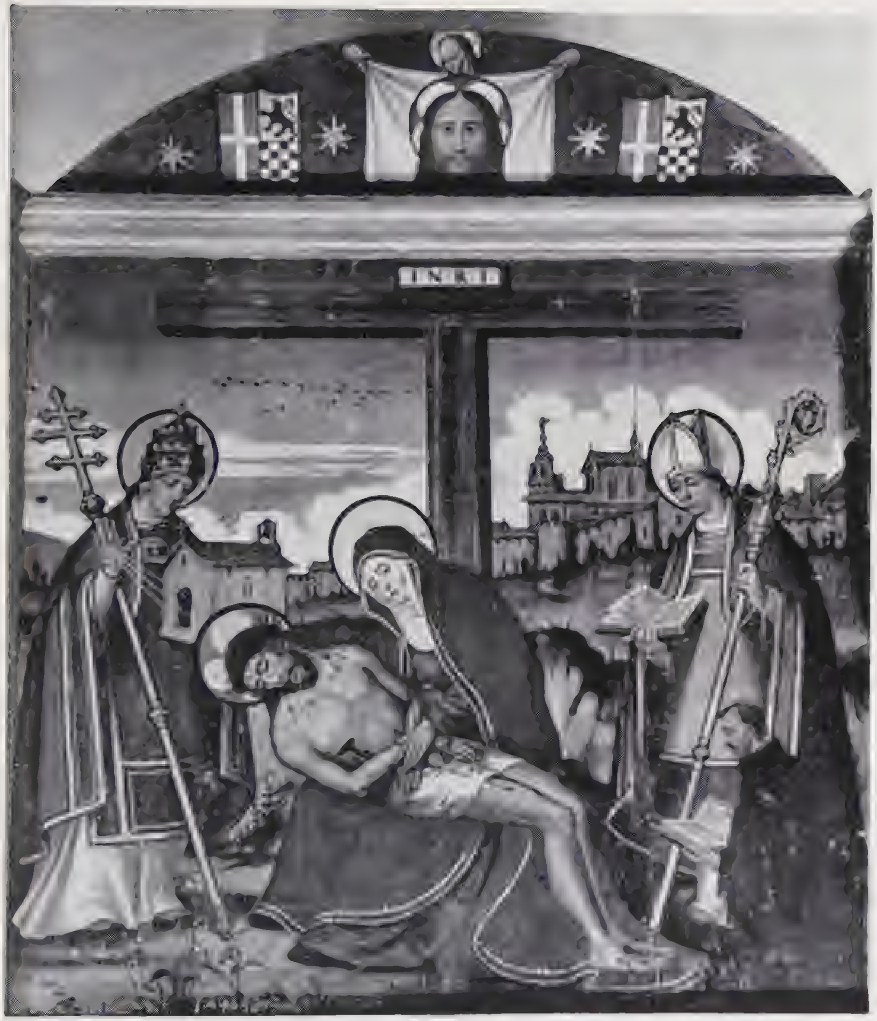

Fig. 56. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. RETABLE OF THE PIETÀ.
S. ESTEBAN, BAÑOLAS
(*Photo. Mas*)

ject is a saintly nun whom the absence of a distinctive emblem prevents me from recognizing (Fig. 57). The landscape behind St. Barbara, like that of the Magdalene's levitation in the Monogrammist's retable dedicated to her in the Diocesan Museum, Gerona, displays a palm tree, reminding us of the St. Felix Master's arboreal predilection.[34]

Among the many debts that I owe to Don Juan Sutrá's unflagging courtesy is the knowledge of the existence, until the civil outbreak in 1936, of a series of panels of the early sixteenth century built into a retable of 1734[35] in the sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de les Aguges close to the village of Sadernes, northeast of Olot; and the photograph of the whole altarpiece that he has likewise sent me (Fig. 58), despite the fact that he made no detailed reproductions of the separate compartments, is sufficient to show that he was right in his statement to me that the panels "had notable points of contact with the works" of the painter whom I call the Catalan Monogrammist. Remembering that Sadernes is near Montagut and the other places in this region where the Monogrammist was extensively employed, I am willing to go beyond Sutrá's scholarly caution and to assign the series to our Master with a high degree of probability. The original retable, like the later structure that subsequently enclosed the panels, must have been dedicated to Our Lady, the patroness of the church. The lateral spaces of this structure contained four compartments from the altarpiece of the presumptive Monogrammist depicting the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, and Resurrection; the pinnacle of the Crucifixion was inserted beneath the central statue of the Madonna; and three sections of the predella changed places with the pinnacle and were transferred to its pristine location at the top of the retable, displaying half-lengths of Christ (of the Mass of St. Gregory), the mourning Virgin, and a male martyr. The Sts. Peter and Paul, painted on the doors at the altar's sides, were creations probably of the time when the new setting was made.

The only form that the photograph reveals with anything approaching clarity is the Virgin of the original predella, who, so far as she can be made out, agrees with the Monogrammist's representations of the sorrowing Mother, but the Christ in this part of the retable, in general appearance and in background, is like the Saviour of

---

[34] See above, p. 107.

[35] The date inscribed on the lower gradine above the altar.

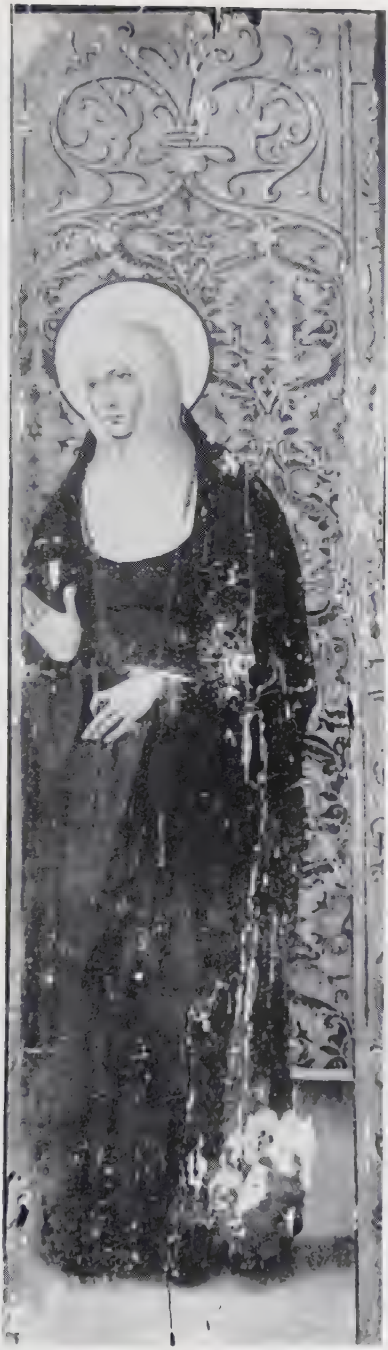

Fig. 57. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. SAINTED NUN. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

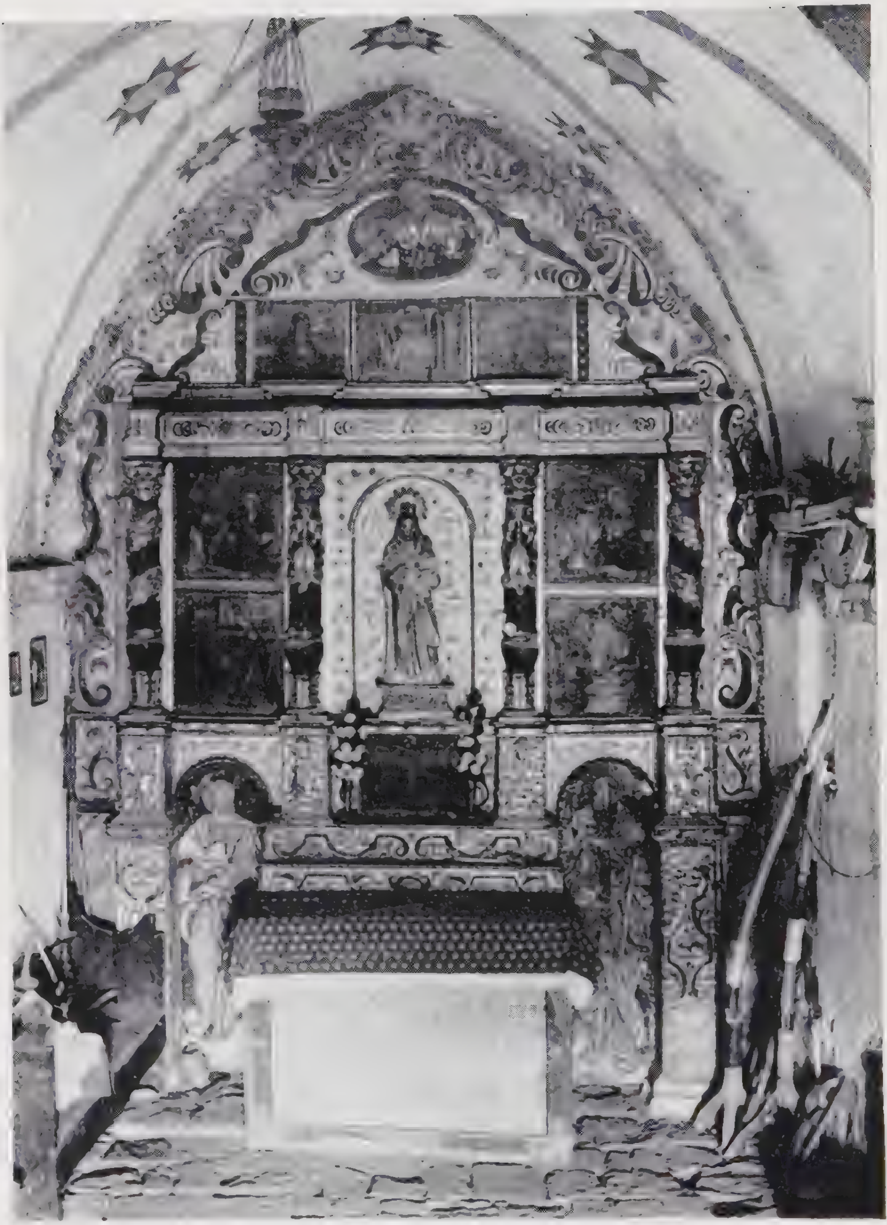

Fig. 58. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST (?). RETABLE OF THE VIRGIN. NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LES AGUGES, NEAR SADERNES
(Photo. Sutrá)

the Passion in the panel from the Valls Collection in the Diocesan Museum, Gerona. For further evidence we have to rely merely upon the similarity of the compositions to his treatments of the same themes. The Annunciation has counterparts in the retables of Nuestra Señora del Mont and especially Sagaró, exhibiting even the same disposition of the angel's drapery and banderole as in the latter instance; the Nativity in the assemblage of Nuestra Señora del Mont was nearly duplicated at Sadernes, not only in the arrangement of the actors but also in the lines of the edifice in the setting; for the composition of the Epiphany, we look again to Sagaró; and the constituents of the Crucifixion can be found in the renderings of Montagut and Llorona. It should be observed, furthermore, that the Monogrammist's habitual, simple design for the haloes seems to be visible in the photograph. The discussion of the retable of Nuestra Señora de les Aguges, which has disappeared and is known to us only in a small reproduction, may strike the reader as a useless academic exercise; but, if it was indeed painted by the Catalan Monogrammist, it illustrated his rather commercial tendency to the less demanding repetition of his achievements, and there is also the chance that it was not completely destroyed and that pieces of it may sometime come to light.

While my book is just beginning to go through the Press, Sutrá has brought to a climax his generosity in sharing with me his knowledge of the Monogrammist by informing me of his discovery of four more of the artist's panels and by sending me a copy of the manuscript of the article that he will publish in volume XI of the *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Gerundenses* recording his find and including a comprehensive and admirable survey of all of the painter's works and achievements. The four panels, reported to come from the former Augustinian monastery, now the parish church, at San Pedro Cercada, near the town of Santa Coloma de Farnés (south of Gerona), were acquired in 1924 by Don José María Pérez-Xifra of Gerona and built into the altar of the chapel of his mansion, now occupied by his widow. The subjects are the Resurrection, Ascension, Assumption (Fig. 59), and Pentecost, of which the first three are merely variants of the Monogrammist's other versions of the themes and the fourth a duller treatment than the rendering in the Sagaró retable. Their chief interest is perhaps that they afford further examples of his curious addiction to Hebrew inscriptions, on a stele in

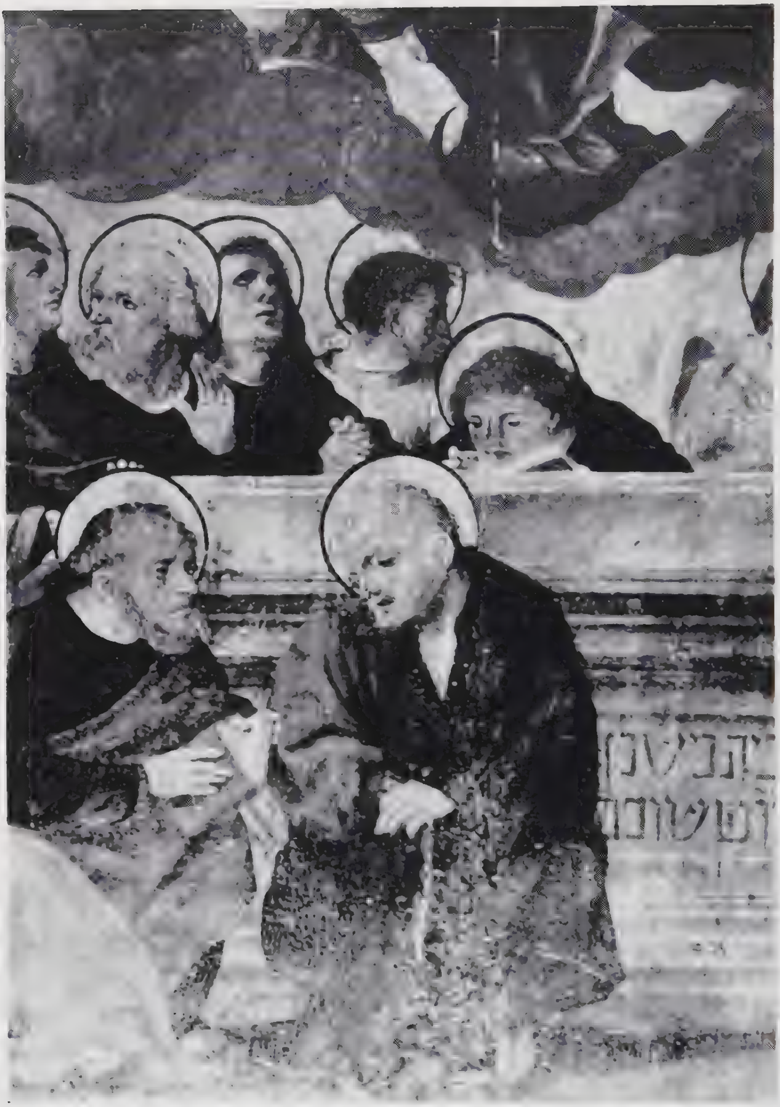

FIG. 59. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. DETAIL OF ASSUMPTION, SECTION OF RETABLE. PÉREZ-XIFRA COLLECTION, GERONA
(*Courtesy of Don Juan Sutrá*)

the Resurrection and on the Virgin's sarcophagus in the Assumption, which we laymen in Semitic studies must give up, since once again they perplex my kind mentor, so outstanding a specialist in the field as Professor Wolfson.[36]

To Sutrá's and Angulo's lists of the Monogrammist's works, I have little to contribute. A panel in the Collection of Don Rafael Masó at Gerona was very obviously executed by our artist (Fig. 60),[37] and, if, as can hardly be doubted, it depicts the marriage of Sts. Cecilia and Valerian, it might conceivably have been a further part of the retable at Molló, for the subject was not included in the Master's compartments until 1936 in place and there may have been originally further sections by him at the extreme right and left of the altarpiece where before the fire of 1936 we could see accretions or repaintings of the eighteenth century.[38] One of the Monogrammist's least inspired compositions, it adds nothing to our understanding of him or to our appreciation of his potentialities.

Nor do we learn anything more from a fragment in the Carreras Candi Collection at Barcelona (Fig. 61), which, though better executed, preserves only a bit of one of his compositions, the figure of a seated, elderly man who repeats a frequent type in the artist's production and displays sleeves striped in the way that he liked to depict in costumes.

In 1930 I saw in the house of the restorer, Monsieur Louis Rollin, at Barcelona an Assumption which was reported to come from the province of Gerona [39] and seemed to me, in the short time that I could devote to its examination, a relic from one of the Monogrammist's altarpieces. The upper part of the picture was a ruin, but the well preserved Apostles in the lower section struck me as plainly impregnated with his fashions.

2. Other Works of the St. Felix Master's Circle

The great impression made in the province of Gerona by the activity of this artist is witnessed even in the later sixteenth century by the

---

[36] See above, p. 141, n. 20.

[37] Subsequently to my writing of these lines Sutrá, in a letter to me, does not quite dare to accept the picture as a creation of the Monogrammist.

[38] See above, p. 136. Señora Masó told Sutrá that her husband acquired the picture from a country house near La Bisbal (east of Gerona), but this might have been merely a stop on its way from Molló.

[39] It cannot be the Assumption of the series in the Pérez-Xifa collection at Gerona which had already been acquired by 1924: see above, p. 153.

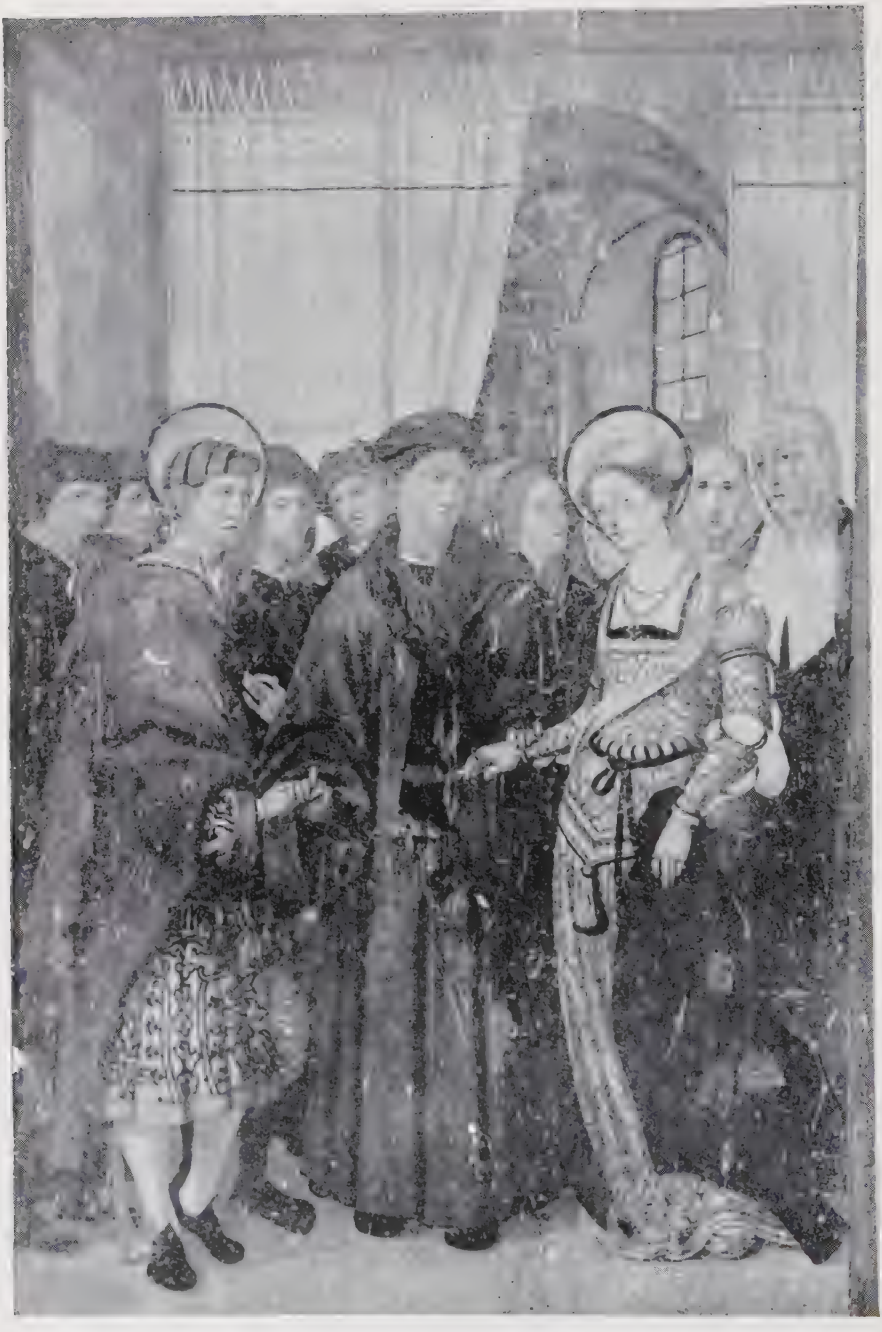

Fig. 60. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST. MARRIAGE OF ST. CECILIA. MASÓ COLLECTION, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

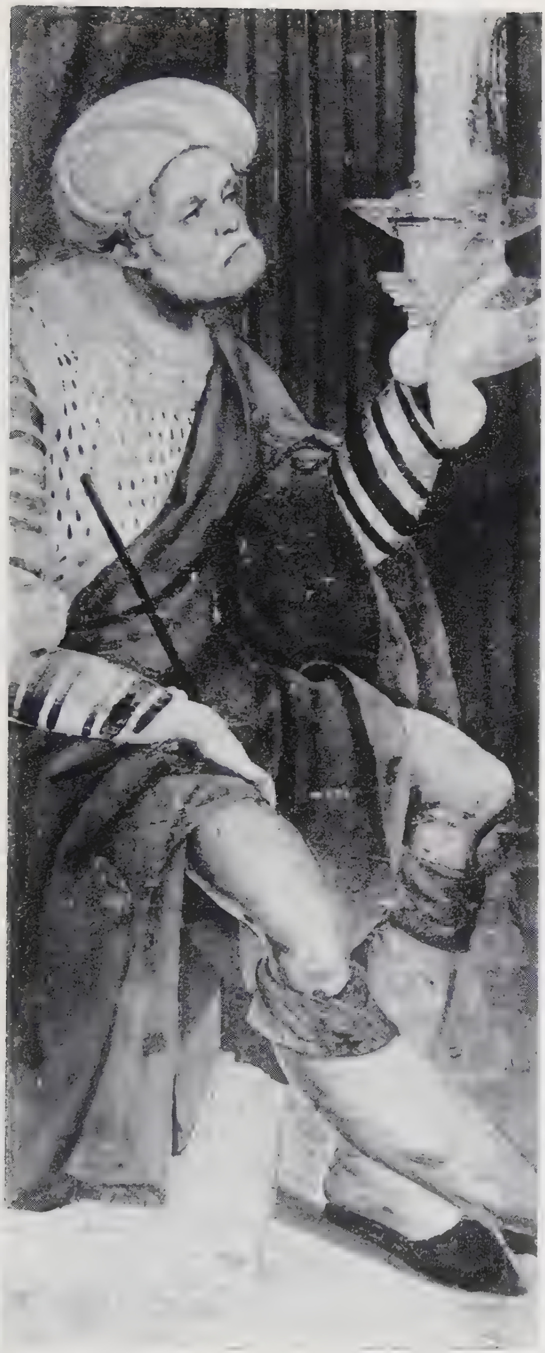

Fig. 61. THE CATALAN MONOGRAMMIST.
FRAGMENT. CARRERAS CANDI
COLLECTION, BARCELONA

retable over the high altar of the church of the sanctuary of Nuestra Señora dels Arcs, near Santa Pau, a work which still shows a dependence upon him and which, having fragmentarily survived the civil war, will concern us in a subsequent volume; but we now have the real pleasure of contemplating and studying a retable of St. Helen, dated 1521, in a chapel of the cathedral of Gerona, endowed by a canon of the period, Narciso Simón,[40] because it reveals to us a painter who was strongly influenced by the St. Felix Master but who, though his contemporary, advanced farther into the ways of the High Renaissance, nay, in certain respects, anticipated the aesthetics of the seventeenth century. Since, to say the least, he was as highly endowed as the St. Felix Master, it is a pity that we have no data justifying even guesses as to what his name was, nor, having oddly discovered no other work by his hand despite his obvious talents, will I coin for him a pseudonym.

The altarpiece, one of the most notable monuments of the Catalan Renaissance, displays elaborate frames extravagantly Plateresque in their taste. Of the paintings, the principal compartment is occupied by an effigy of St. Helen standing against a landscape, and above is the usual Crucifixion. The six lateral compartments are consigned to events in her life and to the subsequent vicissitudes of the Holy Cross. First, she extorts from the Jew Judas the secret of the Cross's hiding-place; witnesses its excavation; kneels in adoring faith at the miracle of resurrection proving its distinction from the gibbets of the thieves; and amidst the ministrations of the clergy, she expires on her bed, while a pair of *putti* receive her soul in the ancient Catalan aspect of an elongated, glistering emanation of ectoplasm. The other two divisions at the sides depict the commonly represented, later episodes in the story of the Cross, Heraclius foiled by an angel (again in the form of one of the *putti* so beloved of the Renaissance) in his attempt to carry it through the gate of Jerusalem in pomp, and the Emperor finally compelled to assume the garb of humility to achieve entrance (Fig. 62).[41] In the predella, about a half-length of the Man of Sorrows, an iconographic unity has been sought in four compartments of saints in the wilds, Francis (receiving the stigmata), John Baptist (?), Jerome, and the local canonized Dominican of

---

[40] See the entries from the notarial archives of Gerona summarized by Ainaud, n. 29, in his unpublished article to which I have so often referred.

[41] For the majority of these scenes, see my vol. VIII, p. 92.

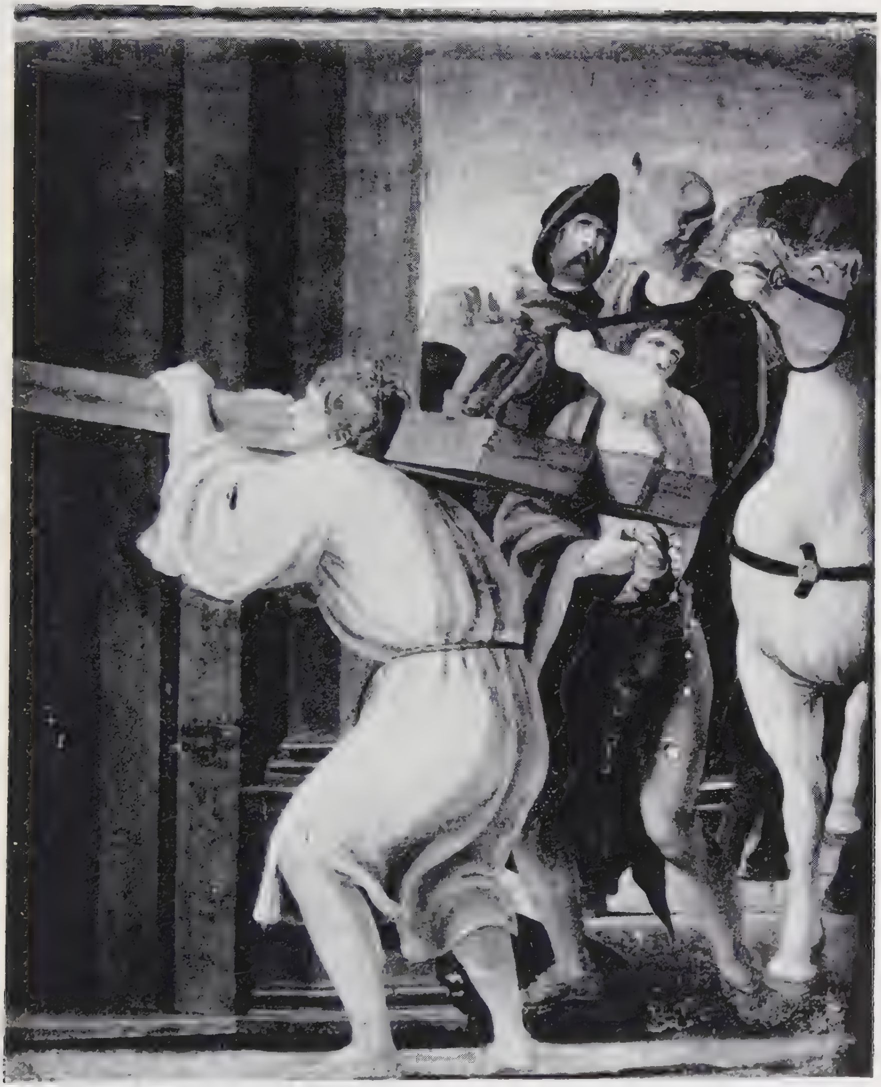

Fig. 62. SCHOOL OF THE ST. FELIX MASTER. HERACLIUS CARRYING THE CROSS IN HUMILITY, SECTION OF RETABLE. CATHEDRAL, GERONA

(*Photo. Mas*)

Gerona, the learned ascetic of the first half of the fourteenth century, Dalmacio Moner, who spent a part of his life as a hermit and whose emblem, as here, is the angel with whom he often conversed.[42] The lunette beneath the surmounting arch at the top of the retable shows us the Virgin of Mercy protecting under her outspread mantle a group of votaries, perhaps the donor and his family. The paintings extend at the sides, beyond the narrative themes, to figures of St. Simon and St. Narcissus ensconced in very ornate passages of simulated architecture and sculpture. The niches in which the two sacred personages are conceived as standing find supports in painted atlantes suggested by Italian arabesques, which constitute the source also of the *motifs* that fill the rest of the spaces. The choice of Narcissus for honor would be explicable enough since he was a patron of Gerona,[43] but the incongruous juxtaposition with Simon, who is rarely represented separately from the other Apostles, is, of course, to be elucidated by the combination of both saints in the donor's full appellation. Of the simulated bases of all this decorative scheme, the one beneath St. Narcissus is inscribed with the year 1521 and the other with even the month of May (in Catalan), probably the dates of the retable's completion or consecration, although no words grant us the at least as significant information about the name of the painter.

The stylistic connection with the St. Felix Master is obvious, and, since the traits that he shares with the author of the retable of St. Helen are an essential part of the St. Felix Master's but not of the other's modes, the influence must have flowed from the St. Felix Master to the artist who now concerns us. The types of the two painters are sometimes fairly analogous, as particularly in the case of haggard old men. The upper right corner of the scene in which Heraclius in humble guise bears the Cross into Jerusalem is filled with heads and technical modes so like those of the St. Felix Master, as, for instance, in the right background of the episode of the dragging of St. Felix by mules, that we could almost believe this Master to have collaborated in a few spots — a supposition, however, for which there is no real justification, inasmuch as artists often so exactly reproduce each other's performances. Fundamentally the two men are different in temper and in execution. The St. Helen painter is more sedate, less given to manneristic distortions, gestures, or violence of expression, carrying farther the phase of the St. Felix Master embodied in the retable of Nuestra Señora de Olivas. Indulging less in *sfumatezza,* he outlines his forms more firmly; he is not so much interested in extended landscapes or in peopling them; and in accord with his comparative sobriety, the architectural backgrounds of the Renaissance in his narratives, despite the capricious arabesques in the outermost sections containing the figures of Sts. Narcissus and Simon, are less rich and less complicated in perspective. Correspondingly he abandons the decorative brilliancy of costume that had lived on in this Master's productions; and the actual nature of his human types has passed into greater agreement with the classic standards of the High Renaissance.

---

[42] Guérin, *Les petits Bollandistes*, under the saint's day, September 24, and A. V. Domenec, *Historia general de los santos y varones ilustres en santidad del principado de Cataluña*, Gerona, 1630, p. 285. He was not formally canonized until 1721, and I owe his identification, as so much else, to the tireless efforts of Don Juan Sutrá in my behalf and to the hagiological proficiency of the canon-archivist of the cathedral of Gerona, Dr. Jaime Marqués Casanovas.

[43] See above, p. 82.

Whereas the compositions themselves in the St. Felix Master's works are not particularly arresting, the author of St. Helen's retable creates more than once original and naturalistic treatments of his themes that foretell the similar innovations of Caravaggio and his circle. While the two already excavated crosses are cast aside into a grove of trees, a pair of sturdy peasant youths, on their knees and bent double, are tugging in the foreground to lift the True Cross from its pit, making the focal point of the picture and set at an extraordinary angle, the one at the front projecting his buttocks toward us. No less new and striking is the composition for the miracle of resurrection wrought by the Cross. The elevated emblem of our salvation and the Herculean fellow who, again unusually turning his back upon us, upholds it constitute majestically the powerful centre of the panel, both purposely exaggerated to an inordinate size, and the man who has been raised from the dead is not represented, as commonly, in the guise of a youngling but in old age, throwing up his arms in a successfully rendered posture of fused amazement and adoration like another Lazarus.

Not only the compositions but separate figures, as occasionally in the works of even the ordinarily more conservative member of the same subdivision of the Catalan school, the Monogrammist, are naturalistically a century ahead of their time. With a Caravaggesque proclivity for making persons of the people the subjects of art, the St. Helen painter seems to have been especially fond of the type of untutored young peasant that he used for the diggers in search of the Cross. Quite in Caravaggio's mood, he transformed into this class of humanity Judas, undergoing St. Helen's interrogation, and even the Emperor Heraclius bearing in self-abasement the Cross's weight. His technical proficiency, so superior to the Catalan average of the period, enabled him, in the difficult task of representing such figures, to convince us completely. Another astounding piece of naturalism is embodied in the man (a physician ?) who, holding a candle, leans over the moribund St. Helen as if to capture the moment of her last breath. Indeed, our master is so astoundingly prophetic of the artistic future that there is much in the actual delineation of the participants in this picturing of the saint's death which might almost deceive us into thinking that we were looking at a work of the early nineteenth century. So, likewise, the man resuscitated by the virtue of the Cross surprisingly raises in our minds recollections of forms by Jacques Louis David.

Uninstructed in regard to the painter's training, except for his participation in the general manner of the St. Felix Master and except for the surmise that he had been in Italy, we can reasonably postulate that he owed his naturalism to his Spanish blood or environment and that his precocity in this quality as in other things was a manifestation, also, of his own, personal, keen initiative.

CHAPTER VI

NICOLÁS DE CREDENSA

A member of the numerous foreign colony of artists at Barcelona in the Renaissance, Nicolás de Credensa is often described in the records as having immigrated from Naples, and he enjoyed in Catalonia a vogue for which it is hard for us to account, at least from the very little that we know of his attainments in his profession. Our acquaintance with him stretches over the long period from February 10, 1498, when, as we shall see, he was remunerated for painting two retables in the church of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, to September 18, 1554, when he acknowledged payment for ornamenting in gold and black seven pieces of leather to embellish the Royal Treasury in the city;[1] but it will appear below that he very possibly survived until 1558. Since in the document relating to the retables in Santos Justo y Pastor he is designated a Neapolitan "now dwelling in Barcelona" and only in later notices is distinguished by the title of a citizen of the town, he had probably arrived shortly before 1498, and he must have been young at the time of his change of residence if we remember that he was still active in 1554 and that no record of him at Naples has been uncovered. If we leave out of account for the moment the productions that he did in collaboration with others, the date of his one documented work from which any part is surely preserved, a retable for the high altar of the parish church at Sitges, is 1499.[2] By 1509 he had already begun to exercise for the rest of his life the honorable office of painter to the city of Barcelona,[3] and we may surmise that he died just before November

---

[1] See J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 3 (1943), 22.

[2] José Carbonell (in *L'Amic de les arts,* Sitges, April 30 and May 31, 1927) publishes the contract without having discovered its exact date, but Madurell (*Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 3 (1943), 24, n. 21) has found a receipt of Credensa for payment on the retable in 1499. The subjects are not named in the receipt, which, however, must refer to the retable that now concerns us, since this document has to do with *the* retable of the church and since the themes of the preserved compartment are Sts. Thecla and Batholomew, the patrons of the parish.

[3] Sanpere, *Los cuatrocentistas,* II, 47 and 212.

22, 1558, when this post was assumed by Antonio Sabater.[4] We shall often have occasion to mention Credensa as an evaluator and expertiser of others' works as well as a partner of Pedro Nunyes, Enrique Fernandes, and Jaime Forner, and it may be guessed that he was chiefly a general manager of artistic undertakings and that his actual handicraft may have been largely confined to such minor arts as polychromy, designing of stained glass, leatherwork, and other similar decorative tasks. The archives indeed show that he received commissions for examples of the major art of painting, i.e., for many retables, but the probability is that he was usually no more than the superintendent of these orders and consigned the execution, at least in greater part, to others.[5] In several publications [6] Madurell has inserted a long list of Credensa's varied and uninterrupted employments in Catalonia, from which it is not germane to our investigation to specify any of the many items except that he was four times from 1538 to 1553 master of the guild of bridle-makers in which at Barcelona the painters were still enrolled. I cannot find, however, included by Madurell the notice that Credensa's shop assumed in 1510 the task of gilding Joan de Burgunya's retable for Santas Creus.[7]

The painter Nicolás de Credensa who is recorded as active in Catalonia from 1575 to 1589 and who made his will in 1591 was a son of an Onofre Aragonés and seems therefore to have been a relative of the painter Juan Aragonés who married Beatriz, the daughter of the elder Nicolás de Credensa.[8] It may be that he, with pretensions also as a poet,[9] took the name of his distant connection by marriage, Nicolás de Credensa I, in order to enhance his reputation and attract patronage.

We derive little aesthetic or even purely archaeological satisfaction from the one extant painting soundly authenticated as by Nicolás de Credensa the elder working alone, a large [10] panel of the paired Sts. Thecla and Bartholomew now in the church of pilgrimage, Sta. María del Vinyet, near Sitges (Fig. 63), the central compartment of the otherwise lost retable that he is documented [11] to have done in 1499 for the high altar of the parish church at Sitges itself, which is dedicated to these two members of the heavenly host. Belonging to the very beginning of his career in Catalonia, it exhibits him at least at this moment in his development as merely having adopted on his arrival from Naples the modes of Huguet and the Vergós family and as not even a highly gifted continuer of their tradition. In particular, he appears to be indebted to Huguet for the type of St. Thecla. The ringed, raised haloes are like many of those used by his Catalan predecessors, and the gold background is still embossed with a foliate pattern not very different from the ones by Huguet which are drawn free-hand and not stereotyped. It is hard to follow Ezio Levi [12] in discerning a connection with the painting of Sicily in the later Quattrocento or in supposing a relationship of the name Credensa with that of the mist-enveloped Sicilian painter, Antonello Crescenzio. Nicolás, so far as we know him, has become thoroughly Catalan, and fails to exhibit traces of his origins in Naples or indeed of Italian art in general. He reveals no consciousness of the Renaissance, and, if he eventually indeed evolved a later manner, the panel fails to provide stylistic data enabling us to recognize his hand confidently in any anonymous work or in collaboration with others in preserved monuments.

---

[4] See J. Puiggarí in *Memorias de la Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona,* III (1880), 299.

[5] See also below, pp. 175 and 215.

[6] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 3 (1943), 19 ff., II, 2 (1944), 71–72, IV, 1–2 (1946), 131, and V, 3–4 (1947), 222, 231, 243, 244, and 251.

[7] See above, p. 80, and *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 1 (1941), 44.

[8] See J. Mas in *Boletín de la Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona,* VI (1911–1912), 315 and 320, and Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* I, 3 (1943), 27.

[9] See Ezio Levi in *Atti della Reale Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti,* Naples (Nuova serie), XII (1931–1932), 198.

No further or significant understanding of Credensa is afforded by two more fragments which, if really painted by him, would be even earlier works, panels in the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, thought to represent a bishop of the city in the fourth century, St. Pacianus, and one of his successors in the see, St. Severus [13] (Fig. 64). The grounds for ascribing them to him are that, having been found in the archives of the church of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, they are reasonably considered to derive from a retable of Sts. Pacianus, Severus, and Lawrence which in the sixteenth century is known to have existed in

---

[10] The dimensions are 2.02 metres high by 1.72 wide.

[11] See above, p. 163.

[12] *Op. cit.*, 191.

[13] Vol. V, p. 84. The subsequently added inscriptions at the tops of the panels embody the mere conjecture in regard to their identity.

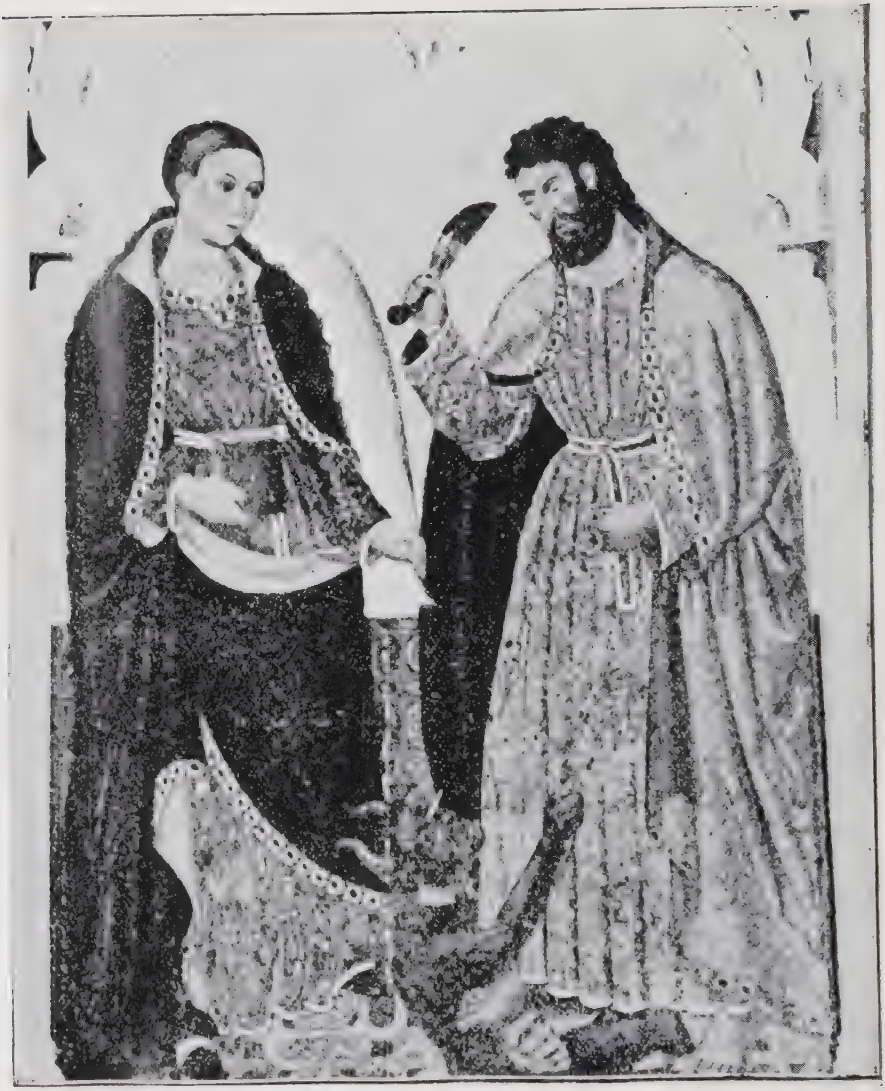

Fig. 63. NICOLÁS DE CREDENSA. STS. THECLA AND BARTHOLOMEW. CHURCH OF STA. MARÍA DEL VINYET, SITGES

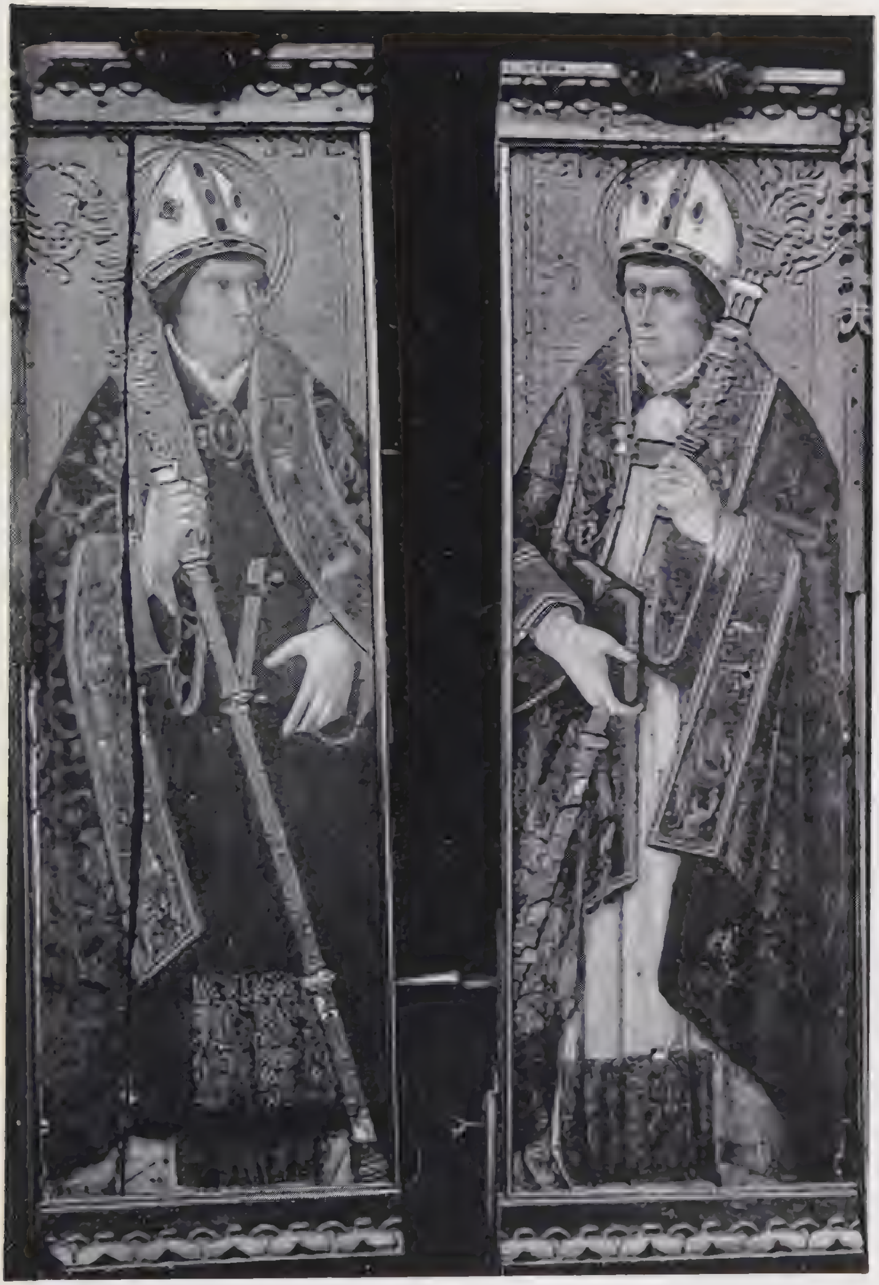

Fig. 64. NICOLÁS DE CREDENSA (?). STS. SEVERUS AND PACIANUS. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in the church [14] and that on February 10, 1498, Credensa acknowledged payment for a retable of unspecified subjects that he had done in this chapel, as well as for another of Sts. Stephen and Olive in the chapel dedicated to them in the edifice.[15] The hitches, however slight, in the way of attributing the panels categorically to Credensa are that we are not *absolutely* certain that they come from his retable, which just conceivably might have been a second retable in the chapel not honoring Pacianus, Severus, and Lawrence, and that the sum which he received, eighteen Barcelona pounds, was so little for executing a retable that he could be supposed only to have done the polychromy of a sculptured altarpiece. Sometimes at the period painters were allowed no more than about thirty pounds for retables, as in the case of Credensa's other retable of Sts. Stephen and Olive in the church of Santos Justo y Pastor; and the explanation of the eighteen pounds may be that his retable in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre was a small affair, perhaps consisting only of the effigies of the three saints, or that the amount was merely an installment on the whole price. Such possibilities may account also for the still pettier sum of sixteen pounds that as late as 1551 he obtained for a retable of St. Sebastian in the church of Sta. María del Mar at Barcelona.[16] The actual style and details of the two panels in the Diocesan Museum, which hamper judgment by repaint, would neither contradict nor confirm an attribution to the hand that did the Sts. Thecla and Bartholomew at Sitges; but, still abiding by the same general and essentially late mediaeval manner as in these two figures, they agree with the date of Credensa's activity in Santos Justo y Pastor.

---

[14] See Durán y Sanpere in *Vida cristiana*, XVI (1928–1929), 388; and above, p. 163.

[15] See Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 23, and V, 3–4 (1947), 244.

[16] Madurell, *Anales y Boletín le los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 25. The still primitive manner of the panels of Sts. Pacianus and Severus proves that Joaquim Guiu (*Vida cristiana*, XIX, 1931–1932, p. 199) is entirely wrong in believing that they are a part of the work done by the painter Ramón Puig on the sculptured high altar of the church as late as 1571–1572; and I cannot even be sure that the language of the documents justifies the opinion of the authors of the volumes on *La Ciudad de Barcelona* in the *Catálogo monumental de España*, (pp. 157–158) that this retable comprised paintings by Ramón Puig or anything else than his polychromy of the carvings.

CHAPTER VII

PEDRO NUNYES AND ENRIQUE FERNANDES

1.

The admirable thoroughness of J. M. Madurell's researches [1] among the Catalan archives enables us for the first time to attempt a sound and intelligent study of these two partners who were outstanding but foreign-born exponents of painting in Catalonia during the early Renaissance. Be it said, however, at the beginning that fate has not been kind enough to preserve for us any of the works done separately by Enrique Fernandes except a fresco insufficient for distinguishing in him an individual manner; but on account of various considerations that I shall subsequently adduce, especially because in works in which no real grounds exist for believing that Fernandes collaborated there emerges precisely the same style as in commissions which Nunyes and he carried out in common, with much confidence we may attach for all practical purposes the name of Nunyes alone to the paintings in which Fernandes was joined with him, and we may predicate that Nunyes was not only a greater and more creative artist but also the dominant personality in the partnership. Indeed the likelihood is that Fernandes, even when laboring on tasks of his own, constituted little more than a reflection of his companion's modes.

2. Biographies of the Two Masters

Both men were natives of Portugal, being several times so denominated in the records, and they would thus be successors of the Portuguese artistic colony in Catalonia during the fifteenth century,[2] following an established tradition of emigration of members of their profession from the extreme west to the extreme east of the peninsula. The first appearance of Nunyes in history is in 1513 when he drew a design for a window of the cathedral at Barcelona,[3] and Madurell [4] justly conjectures that his arrival in the city must have been subsequent to January 2, 1508, since his name is not found in the list of the painters of Barcelona all of whom on that date were assessed for contributions to defray the expenses of a retable in the church of Nuestra Señora de la Merced dedicated to their patron, St. Luke. The interested reader will find in Madurell's articles a detailed account and documentation of the long and full activity of Nunyes as author of retables, as expertiser of others' productions, and as officer in the guild of painters; but we need to recapitulate only, first, the commissions that either have to do with extant or until recently extant works or possess some significance apposite to our purposes and, second, the events in his life germane to the definition of his artistic character.

---

[1] Articles in the *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, from I, 3 (1943) to II, 3 (1944), and in the Portuguese periodical, *Museu*, VI (1950), 131–150.

[2] See my vol. V, pp. 99–100.

[3] Madurell's first article, *Anales y Boletín*, etc., I, 3 (1943), 15.

[4] *Ibid.*, 37–38.

He worked during almost all his career in partnership with others according to what was evidently a regular custom at the time among painters of the peninsula, making it difficult for us to arrive at the personal style of any single master. As early as January 8, 1517, he entered into an association with the painter of Neapolitan origin, Nicolás de Credensa, which lasted at least until 1524,[5] and we shall later see how again in 1532 he took Credensa into an artistic firm that he had constituted.

Since on November 13, 1518,[6] he signed a receipt for repairing eighteen "images" in the refectory of the building of the charitable institution at Barcelona called the Pía Almoyna and thus had affiliations at least of some sort with the ornamentation of the edifice, the question might arise as to whether he actually did any of the frescoes that once decorated the room where he is recorded to have labored. The remains of the building no longer exist as such and are incorporated in the cloister of the cathedral, but the four walls of the refectory [7] were probably all then embellished with mural paintings, one of which was preserved late enough into the nineteenth century to have been the subject of what looks like a fairly exact copy in water color [8] by the Catalan artist, Jaime Serra y Gisbert. Somewhat similar in theme to the panel by the San Francisco Master in the cathedral of Palma [9] and depicting a group of the indigent being fed at a long table from the funds of the institution, it was obviously a work of the early sixteenth century, but, so far as can be judged by the copy, it revealed no ties with the style of Pedro Nunyes. Indeed, the word "images" would suggest, though not conclusively prove, that the objects repaired by him in the refectory were statues, and in any case no entry in the archives as yet discovered bridges the gap between his reconditioning of certain works in the Pía Almoyna, whether paintings or not, and his execution of original frescoes in the place.

---

[5] Madurell, first article, 19.

[6] *Ibid.*, 77. At the same time he was paid for a retable, but there is no reason to believe, with Madurell and the authors of the *Catálogo monumental, Ciudad de Barcelona*, 309, that it was made for the Pía Almoyna rather than for somewhere else in the premises of the cathedral.

[7] See my vol. X, p. 307.

[8] Reproduced by P. de Madrazo, *Museo español de antigüedades*, V, 93, and by Sanpere, *Los cuatrocentistas catalanes*, II, 190.

On January 3, 1526, he contracted for his first extant, documented work, the paintings on the wooden shutters, now in the Museum of Catalan Art, Barcelona, for a lost sculptured retable in the chapel of the guild of silversmiths in the church of Nuestra Señora de la Merced in the city, the attribution of which was conclusively proved by Madurell's fulfilment, in 1950, [10] of his promise to publish the records in the case. The altarpiece had been planned as early as 1510 when the carpenter and sculptor, Pedro Torrent, with whom Nunyes collaborated also on another occasion, agreed to do the carved frames, finishing the job in 1513; and the images that constituted the retable itself, statues of St. Eloy, the patron of all goldsmiths and silversmiths, and, flanking him, of Sts. Andrew and John Baptist were made between 1516 and 1517 by the north-European sculptor Jean Monet. An additional member of the Portuguese colony at Barcelona, the sculptor Diego Peris, was engaged on June 19, 1521, to undertake some task for the guild, but, since the major part of the document has not been found, we are uninformed in regard to the nature of his employment, whether some further carving on the retable or other decoration of their chapel. In the contract of 1526 Nunyes assumed responsibility for the polychromy of the sculptured retable and for the painting of the two shutters that enclosed it. The subjects of the interiors of the shutters are left to the decision of the guild's authorities, but naturally they turned out to be scenes from the life of St. Eloy, six in number, i.e., three on each wing. The theme of the exteriors, however, is definitely specified, the Annunciation, to be executed in the grisaille so frequently used for this and other representations on the outsides of shutters, and, as a matter of fact, in the preserved pieces, each of the two participants in the Annunciation stretches over the whole reverse of a triad from the story of St. Eloy.

---

[9] See my vol. VI, p. 484. F. P. Verrié (*Guía artística de Mallorca,* Barcelona, 1948, p. 43) suggests that the picture at Palma may commemorate the founding of the Pía Almoyna in this city.

[10] In the Portuguese periodical, *Museu,* VI (1950), 131–150.

All these data would seem to establish securely Nunyes's authorship of the panels without a shadow of a doubt, and yet there is a slight shadow which, however, I think, can be cleared away. According to the widely spread practice of one artist farming out contracts to another, Nunyes is twice given explicit permission in the contract of 1526 to consign the execution of the polychromy and paintings to someone else, but that he did not so do and that the commissioners did not really expect him to hand over the task to a colleague can be strongly argued from a number of considerations. In the first place, he himself is required in the contract to paint a trial-piece that must receive the approbation of the guild's authorities before he is allowed to proceed with the entire undertaking. Second, in the only record that we have of any of the series of payments, he alone on March 4, 1529, was the recipient of one of these periodic remunerations. Finally, the panels fully accord in style with the other work that he carried out by himself, the retable in the church of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, and with the further paintings that on internal evidence are to be ascribed to his brush.

Until the time in 1936 when so many important Catalan works of art were destroyed by the revolutionary outbreaks, there existed over the high altar of the parish church at San Ginés de Vilasar, north of Barcelona (also called Vilasar de Dalt), a vast retable documented as a joint work of Pedro Nunyes and Enrique Fernandes. In a manner of speaking it is still preserved as a basis for investigating the style, since before its conflagration it had been partially, though inadequately, photographed by the Mas Archive; and I myself had the privilege of examining it on the spot in the summer of 1930. Our first notice of the undertaking is on January 9, 1520, when Pedro Torrent, whom we have found to have been occupied, together with Nunyes, on the altarpiece of the silversmiths, arranged to do the carved framework and the statues of the Virgin and St. Genesius at the centre.[11] The contract with the two painters has not been unearthed, but they had finished sections of the enterprise by January 13, 1527, when a curious document[12] incorporates the fact that a sculptor Master Martín (in all probability, the celebrated Martín Díaz de Liatzasolo), having been asked to give his expert opinion on what they had already done, found defects in a panel of St. Michael by Enrique Fernandes but approved two compartments of unspecified themes by Nunyes. Reference is made in the document also to other contributions to the retable by the partners which Master Martín had not seen. In 1532, Nunyes rented a house at Vilasar, stating that it was to be leased by him until he should conclude the execution of the retable,[13] but he had brought to a conclusion the predella by July 27, 1533, at which date the painters Jaime Forner and Nicolás de Credensa inspected this section of the altarpiece and pointed out in it a few minor shortcomings.[14] Although Nunyes is definitely denominated the predella's creator, the words "los dits pintors" employed in the document when there is allusion to a change demanded by the experts in the scene of the Betrayal reveal that Enrique Fernandes was still collaborating. The final payments to the two associates were distributed through the years 1534 and 1536.[15]

---

[11] Madurell, third article in the Barcelona *Boletín*, 32.

[12] *Ibid.*, 38.

On December 3, 1525, Pedro Nunyes promised to complete the long since lost retable over the high altar of the church of Sta. María del Pino at Barcelona, which had been largely carried out by the painter Joan de Burgunya by the time of his death in this year,[16] and on April 9, 1527, he contracted [17] to do the extant retable over the high altar of the church at Capella in Aragon, directly east of Huesca, another work for which Joan de Burgunya had received the order but on which at his decease he had gone no further than to spread the gesso over the panels. The region of Capella on the frontier between Aragon and Catalonia often patronized artists of the latter province, but an additional motive for the assignment of the order to Nunyes was that the donor, Gabriel Miró, a prominent citizen of Capella, held the dignity also of a canon in the cathedral of Barcelona. Enrique Fernandes was at least eventually united to Nunyes in the task, inasmuch as both masters give the receipt for the final payment on December 3, 1533, and in this receipt there is mention of what seems to have been a second contract in which Fernandes also had his share.

---

[13] Madurell, second article, 29.
[14] Madurell, third article, 48.
[15] Madurell, second article, 30–31.
[16] Madurell, first article, 78 ff.
[17] Madurell, third article, 38.

On the next preserved, documented work of Nunyes, a retable in the church of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, there is no notice, either in the contract or receipts, of Fernandes's collaboration, so that we are justified in taking it as an example of the former's personal manner. There is, of course, always the possibility that a record might appear revealing the assistance of Fernandes, who, although the formal, legal deed of partnership had not yet been consummated, was certainly a companion of Nunyes by this time; but such a discovery would have little or no significance, because we shall later summon arguments to show that even in works surely done by them in conjunction Nunyes was the creator of the style. The retable in Santos Justo y Pastor adorns the chapel of S. Félix over an altar on which it was the custom of the citizens to take their most solemn oaths.[18] On November 29, 1525, the nobleman Don Jaime de Requeséns, having obtained the concession of this chapel, was authorized to have a retable and a tomb there constructed,[19] and on January 10, 1526,[20] he commissioned the sculptor, Juan de Bruselas, to do the retable's woodwork. Of the contract of June 7, 1528, with Nunyes for the paintings, only the heading has come to light,[21] but a document of August 29 in the same year incorporates a modification of the clause in this contract according to which much of the mere gilding had been turned over to the painter, Gabriel Alemany.[22] On September 17, 1528, Gabriel made a new arrangement with Requeséns for the gilding and received a third of the sum stipulated for the task, which was followed by another payment nine days later.[23] The remuneration of Nunyes himself was divided between the dates October 8, 1528, January 8, 1529, and March 26, 1530, on the last of which the retable was already completed.[24]

Although we have seen that Nunyes and Fernandes had been collaborating for a number of years, we possess no knowledge of an explicit agreement between them before a deed of June 22, 1532.[25] Unfortunately no more than the heading also of this document has been found, so that we are ignorant of its exact terms, but we glean from the numerous subsequent records of their productions that it lasted until the death of Fernandes in 1546 and that either one of them seems to have been empowered to sign in the name of the firm and to undertake commissions of his own independently. A few months later, on October 7, 1532, they admitted Nicolás de Credensa into the company for a period of six years,[26] and by specifying that he should not be allowed to participate in the actual painting of the commissions which they received they betrayed what may perhaps be deduced from our many other records of Credensa,[27] namely that he was, at least chiefly, no more than a kind of industrial journeyman in his profession, concerned largely with the financial phases of the orders upon which he was engaged and probably often farming them out to others for execution.

---

[18] F. P. Verrié, *La iglesia de los Santos Justo y Pastor*, Barcelona, 1944, p. 24.

[19] Cels Gomis, *Ciutat de Barcelona*, in the series *Geografia general de Catalunya*, 448, n. 1197.

[20] Madurell, second article, 32.

[21] *Ibid.*, 34.

[22] *Ibid.*, 34–35, and third article, 41.

[23] Second article, 38–39.

[24] *Ibid.*, 40, and third article, 42–44.

[25] First article, 16–19.

Since we shall find that Nunyes did an undocumented, extant retable for the Iglesia de la Piedad at La Seo de Urgel, it is important to note that the spread of his reputation even thus farther north than Capella is proved also by a contract for a lost altarpiece in the Dominican church of the former town, a legal deed which Pujol y Tubáu [28] guesses, for reasons that he does not specify, to be dated about 1540.

On March 14, 1541, Nunyes and Fernandes agreed to execute their last extant, documented work, a retable honoring the early, martyred bishop of Barcelona, St. Severus, done for the Hospital of Ecclesiastics in this city. Durán y Sanpere,[29] who first published the retable, traces its interesting peregrination from the Hospital to the town of Olesa de Bonesvalls and finally back to Barcelona and its Diocesan Museum; he effectively clears away erroneous statements that had been made about it; and he conclusively establishes the identity of the preserved retable with that of the contract of 1541. The identity is chiefly proved by the agreement of the extant pieces with the subjects both of the sculpture (by an unascertained artist) and painting which the contract specifies, except that the carved bust of the Eternal Father in the pinnacle reveals that this theme was eventually substituted for a sculptured Crucifixion demanded in the document.

---

[26] First article, 20, and third article, 44.

[27] See above, p. 164.

[28] In *Homenatge a Antoni Rubió i Lluch,* Barcelona, 1936, II, 473. See also Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona,* II, 1 (1944), 59, and IV, 3–4 (1946), 375.

[29] See his important article, *Un retaule de Sant Sever exiliat i repatriat,* in *Vida cristiana,* XVI (1928–1929), 383–389 and 419–427; and cf. also Madurell, second article, 58, and third article, 55.

According to the persistent and (for us) confusing practice of artists' partnerships,[30] we find Nunyes, six years after the death of Fernandes, already associated with another master, Pedro Serafí, who will not occupy our attention until a later volume as belonging to the advanced Renaissance. From 1552 to 1554 they were paid jointly for two subordinate retables in the parish church of S. Martín at Arenys del Munt (just north of Barcelona), both of which have long since perished.[31] Our last notice of Pedro Nunyes as still alive is on March 5, 1556, at the marriage of his son of the same name, a physician.[32]

Inasmuch as the only preserved examples of the many works upon which Enrique Fernandes is recorded to have labored are, with one unilluminating exception, those which he did in collaboration with Nunyes, practically all the pertinent facts in his biography have been mentioned in our outline of the latter's career. He is often described in the documents as a Portuguese, and in one instance there is affixed to his name the further identifying word, Lactuosa (or perhaps to be read, Lactecosa). Madurell [33] guesses that the Portuguese town of his birth might be hidden in the word; but there is no place in Portugal that is even approximately thus spelled, and in a deed of April 26, 1537, by which in a fraternal spirit he made a present of twenty gold ducats to a brother of his, [34] he states this person to derive from the well known spa, São Pedro do Sul, in the Portuguese diocese of Viseu. For some unexplained reason, the brother, Fernando Gonzales, had a different surname (taken from his mother?), but, if Enrique was also a native of São Pedro do Sul, it is just possible (though far from certain, in view of the commonness of the appellation Fernandes) that he was a relative of the renowned Portuguese painter of the sixteenth century Vasco Fernandes, called the Grão Vasco, whom likewise the diocese of Viseu can claim.

---

[30] See above, p. 170.

[31] Madurell, first article, 16, and second article, 63–64. Madurell stated in the first article that the two retables were destroyed in the revolutionary outbreaks of 1936, but he corrects this error in the second article, admitting that they had disappeared at least by the eighteenth century. Pedro Serafí also did separately the largely preserved retable over the high altar at Arenys.

[32] Madurell, first article, 59.

[33] *Ibid.*, 62.

[34] *Ibid.*, 64.

He first crops up in Barcelona in a document of December 20, 1525, and, since he is therein described as a citizen of Barcelona and two years' residence was required to gain this title, he must have arrived in Catalonia at least by 1523. The document of 1525 is an acknowledgment of a financial debt to the Catalan painter and maker of mirrors, Pedro Pallargues (or Despallargues), with whom he seems to have been on terms of intimate friendship and who was the son of the late mediaeval painter of the same name, until recently known wrongly as Pedro Espalargucs.[35] None of the considerable list of works that Madurell amasses as done separately by Enrique Fernandes has survived, but there does exist the result of a minor order not recorded by the Catalan scholar, the frescoing in 1545 of the wall to the right of the entrance to the sacristy in the cathedral of Barcelona with a simulated architectural and heraldic background for the sarcophagi of Count Ramón Berenguer I of Barcelona and his wife Almodis.[36] Although, however, representation of the human form in four *putti* is included in this mural decoration, they unhappily do not afford sufficient material for distinguishing in general Enrique's style from that of Pedro Nunyes, if indeed it was distinguishable (!). His death in 1546 we have already had occasion to register.

3. THE PROBLEM OF SEPARATING THE STYLE OF FERNANDES FROM THAT OF NUNYES

The ways that might seem at first sight to lead to a dissociation of the personalities of Nunyes and Fernandes turn out in the end to be blind alleys. Even at best the four *putti* frescoed by Enrique alone in the cathedral of Barcelona would be a scant foundation upon which to build a conception of a painter's style, and in addition not only do they reveal no peculiar qualities but they fall into the general fashions of the paintings in which Pedro is demonstrated to have been Enrique's coöperator. The documents explicitly place among Pedro's contributions to the retable at San Ginés de Vilasar the predella and two other compartments, and they assign to Enrique the St. Michael on the *guardapolvos*; but, since until Madurell's recent publication of the documents we did not know of this division of their labors or even that Enrique had been joined to Pedro at all in the enterprise, neither

---

[35] *Ibid.*, 60–61, and second article, 55. See also my vol. IX, p. 854.

[36] J. Mas, *Guía-itinerario de la Catedral de Barcelona*, Barcelona, 1916, pp. 38–41.

I nor anyone else, before the retable's destruction in 1936, thought of attempting to discern whether the St. Michael diverged in style from the parts by Pedro, and the photographs of the retable taken by the Mas Archive prior to its loss are too meagre and undetailed to show in the archangel any departure from the modes incorporated in Pedro's specified sections.

Here and there in the works done by them in partnership certain figures appear more primitive than the manner of the High Renaissance that in general characterizes the two artists' production; but this apparent dualism occurs also in the altarpieces of the silversmiths and of the church of Santos Justo y Pastor on which no document justifies us in believing that Enrique collaborated with Pedro, and in any case it is perfectly possible that a single painter should in some of his forms have clung to the earlier tradition. I will point out less advanced passages as I discuss the series of works, and it is significant that they often occur within the compass of single panels the other parts of which embody more mature modes, whereas the documents concerning the retable of San Ginés de Vilasar suggest that it was the custom of the partners each to do whole panels and not both to work upon a single compartment. Furthermore, one of the Morellian traits by which the style of the works that issued from the shop of Nunyes and Fernandes may easily be recognized, the rendering of the eyebrows by a very sharp and pronounced zigzag, is detectable on some of the more primitive as well as upon the less primitive figures.

What evidence, however, is at our disposal virtually demonstrates that Nunyes was the leading spirit in the combine, that he deserves the credit of the style which we discover in their joint productions, and that Fernandes merely echoed his associate's manner as faithfully — or dare we say, as slavishly? — as possible. Nunyes received a larger number of separate orders than his friend, and in one of the receipts for payment on the retable of San Ginés de Vilasar [37] he specifically denominates Fernandes, not his collaborator, but his assistant. We have also seen [38] that, in the judgment of one of the contemporary experts who were asked to give their opinions in regard to the merits of the respective contributions of the two associates to the retable of San Ginés de Vilasar, Nunyes was the more competent artist. Finally, so far as our records go, Fernandes did not help Nunyes on the retables of the silversmiths or of the church of Santos Justo y Pastor, and yet the works in which Fernandes is registered to have had his share reveal no elements that cannot in these retables be paralleled.

---

[37] Madurell, second article, 31.

[38] P. 173.

4. The Extant Paintings by Nunyes (in Some Instances in Collaboration with Fernandes, Who Probably Acted as a Mere Assistant)

We investigators of the history of art have been taught by sad experience that we have little to pride ourselves upon in the matter of connoisseurship, and it is therefore a consolation to me that I had practically determined on internal evidence and conditionally stated in my manuscript that Pedro Nunyes was the author of the shutters of the retable of the silversmiths, now in the Barcelona Museum, before Madurell[39] published the corroboratory documents. The first scene from the story of St. Eloy, demonstrated by the curve of the upper part of its frame to have been the topmost section of the right wing, represents his birth, with which there is telescoped his mother's dream, during pregnancy, of the eagle symbolically bowing to her thrice. In the next compartment, having perfected himself in his profession of goldsmith, he weighs one of the two saddles that he had miraculously fashioned for King Clotaire II out of the gold given him by the sovereign to make only a single such object. The other saddle, already weighed or to be weighed, is held by an attendant, and the weighing proves that the amount of the precious metal which the king consigned to St. Eloy had supernaturally sufficed for both specimens. The lowest panel in the right wing depicts the saint's consecration as bishop of Noyon in a composition that, as in the retables of Capella and St. Severus, clings to the long established, gorgeous Spanish tradition for the iconography of these great ecclesiastical ceremonies. In the first division on the left wing we look at St. Eloy performing the sacrament of baptism.[40] The second compartment exhibits him presiding over the procession which brought the body of St. Martial to Paris[41] (Fig. 65), and the final scene is that

---

[39] See above, p. 171.

[40] I have been unable to find what specific event in his life here receives embodiment: Madurell describes the scene as St. Eloy's conversion of his enemies.

[41] This seems the most likely interpretation of the subject, but it may represent the translation of the body of one of the many other saints whose relics he found or for whose remains even as bishop he continued to exercise his profession in making reliquaries.

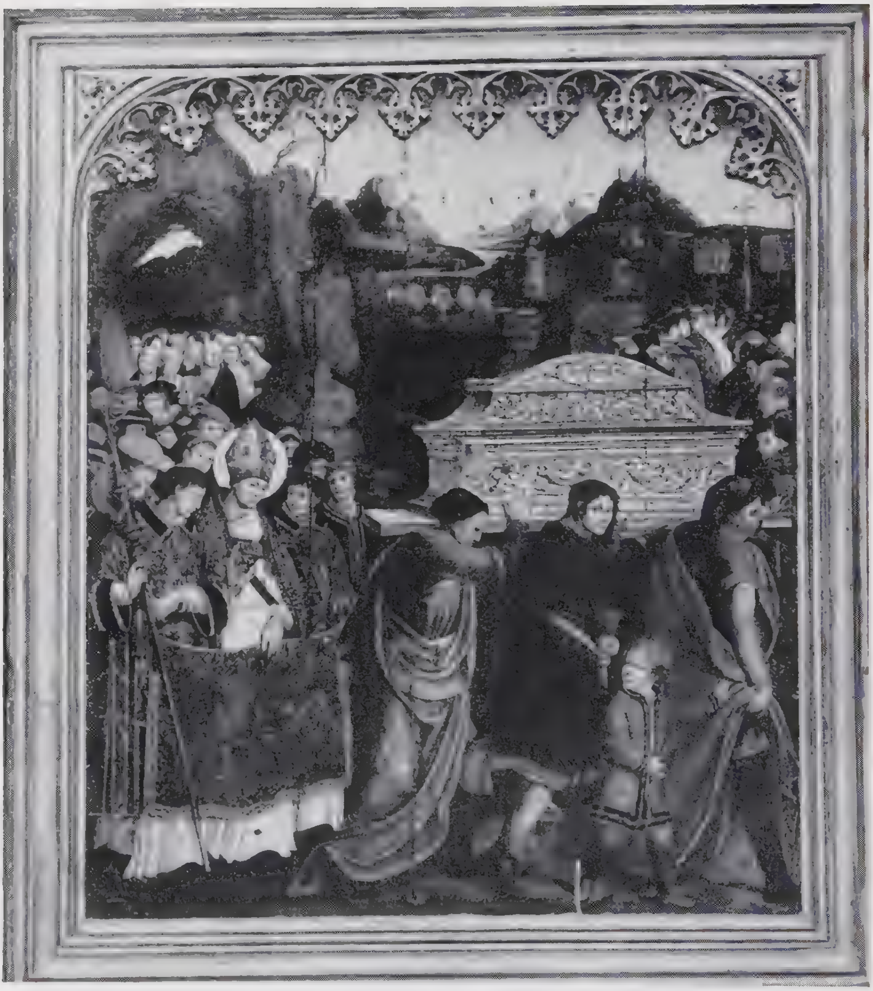

Fig. 65. PEDRO NUNYES. ST. ELOY PRESIDING OVER THE TRANSLATION OF ST. MARTIAL'S BODY, SECTION OF RETABLE. MUSEUM OF CATALAN ART, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

of his obsequies, with Batilde, the queen of Clovis II, after she had failed in her desire to obtain his body for her abbey of Cheller, kneeling beside his bier to kiss his hand. The Annunciation, in grisaille, extending over the reverses of the two shutters, has already [42] called for our comment.

The style of which Nunyes is a thoroughly competent but not really a distinguished exponent already belongs, somewhat prematurely for the Iberian peninsula, to the fully evolved Renaissance and even passes often into out-and-out mannerism like that of Italy. The school of Portugal in the sixteenth century was much more of an offshoot of Flemish mannerism of the Renaissance and provides no ground for a belief that he there obtained his first training. Indeed I cannot follow Angulo [43] in discerning in Nunyes any significant relationship to such Flemings of the developed Cinquecento as Heemskerck, Van Scorel, or Van Hemessen. His modes so agree with the uniform, generalized, Italian classicism diffused at the period throughout the greater part of Europe that it is impossible to say whether he learned his art in Italy, France, Catalonia, or even in some other region of Spain. The scenes from St. Eloy's life give the effect of being more conservative than his other works, and this is not because they are earlier in date, [44] since the seemingly more advanced retables of Santos Justo y Pastor and of Capella were being executed at approximately the same time, but because the very subjects, more modern than Biblical themes, naturally suggested a treatment in the terms of the life and persons of the artist's own day which militated against any great indulgence in manneristic tendencies or in the Greco-Roman types of the Renaissance. Indeed, even in the later retable of St. Severus, the episodes from his story are told with almost as much sobriety. It was when Nunyes had to deal with events from the New Testament, where semi-ancient costume had long been the rule, that he felt himself freer to introduce the countenances of ubiquitous European classicism and to give some rein to the extravagances of mannerism. Thus, on the reverses of the very shutters of the retable of the silversmiths, the Annunciation and particularly the Gabriel and the Eternal Father sending the dove of the Holy Spirit are so accommodated to the more grandiloquent harmonies of the full Cinquecento that, were we not informed, we should scarcely have discerned the same painter as in the obverses. Moreover, the narrative panels relating to St. Eloy now and then exhibit forms of a more advanced stamp than the majority of the figures, for instance the King Clotaire in the scene of the weighing, the dignitary at the extreme right in the consecration, or the first bearer of St. Martial's casket; and members of the crowd surrounding Clotaire show that manneristic affectation of pose and gesture is already adumbrated.

---

[42] P. 171.

[43] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 330, n. 1.

[44] Sanpere (*Los cuatrocentistas*, II, 213), without giving his authority, alleges that the shutters were being painted during the course of the year 1524, but he must be wrong since the contract is not dated before 1526.

The passages here and in the other works of Nunyes that perhaps falsely appear to us as less advanced unfold the phase in the development of the Spanish school which consists, whether or not under some influence of Italy, in a relaxation and amelioration of the immediately anterior Hispano-Flemish style and in the expansion of this style into only a restricted degree of the grandeur of the Renaissance. It is the phase embodied in Castile and Andalusia by such men as León Picardo and Pedro Romana, but there is no master in western Spain to whose works the attainments of Nunyes show more than a very general relation. We cannot, therefore, use the seemingly more traditional sections as a basis for the hypothesis that he benefited after leaving Portugal by an artistic education in the adjacent Spanish regions, and the mode of these sections might easily have been evolved out of Catalan precedent by bringing it into accord with the temper of the Cinquecento.

Defining characteristics that we shall note in the other works of Nunyes are easily detectable in this, the first achievement of his that it falls to our lot to analyze. There are many examples of his predilection for endowing his actors with beady eyes and for figures looking directly at us from the pictures, and the memorable youth at the centre of the group of three carrying the reliquary of St. Martial fixes us with his gaze in the manner that we shall observe in several of the participants in the translation of the body of St. Severus in the retable in the Diocesan Museum. In the midst of the gentle faces of his women and young men, he is prone to insert harsh profiles, as in the cleric to whom we have referred in the consecration or in the attendant holding one of the saddles in the episode of the weighing. The edifices used as settings to the scenes are distinguished, as generally with Nunyes, by a Bramantesque solemnity and restraint rather than by a sympathy for Plateresque ornateness. According to the dualism of conservative and advanced elements that we have seen to be typical of the master, here and also as late as the retable of St. Severus there is maintained the mediaeval Spanish school's realization of the decorative values of brilliant brocades in a painting, especially in the compartment of the consecration which clings to the long established formal and richly colored treatments of such themes; and, in contrast to the grisaille of the Annunciation and to other performances of his likewise in the spirit of the times, the scenes from St. Eloy's life are still faithful to the warmer tonalities of the earlier period in contrast to the frigidities that the antiquarianism of the High Renaissance tended to provoke.

In the second work of Nunyes where we possess no ascertained justification for postulating the assistance of Enrique Fernandes, the retable in the chapel of the church of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, the central part consists of two large compartments, the Crucifixion in its customary spot at the top and beneath it the Lamentation over the Dead Christ. The six somewhat smaller scenes at the sides are the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Deposition (Fig. 66), Entombment, and Resurrection. As at Capella and (until 1936) at Vilasar, the doors at the sides of the altar still exist, with the traditional themes for these places, the standing figures of Sts. Peter (Fig. 67) and Paul. The Latin inscriptions in their haloes are identical with those at Capella, where, however, more of the letters are visible: for St. Peter, "O beate Petre, claviger etheree (*sic*, for aetherie), intercede"; and for St. Paul, "O beate Paule, apostole, doctor gentilium." The arrangement of the predella, between the two doors, is anomalous. Just above and behind the altar is a Holy Sepulchre, with a figure of the dead Christ in a glass case,[45] thus confining the predella at this point to a narrow strip above the sarcophagus. The paintings in this strip consist of three busts of saints. In the middle is a canonized, youthful deacon, in all probability St. Felix, to whom the chapel is dedicated and who was required to be represented in the retable in the concession of the chapel to Requeséns, dated November 29, 1525.[46] We may assume that it is the same St. Felix who is

---

[45] Once a part, though a later substitution for the original Christ, of the otherwise lost, sculptured Entombment in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in the church. In the retable by Nunyes, the panels of the strip of the predella and of Sts. Thomas and Jerome were somewhat changed from their pristine positions for the sake of adaptation to the insertion of the Saviour's effigy: see F. P. Verrié, *op. cit.*, 75.

[46] See above, p. 174.

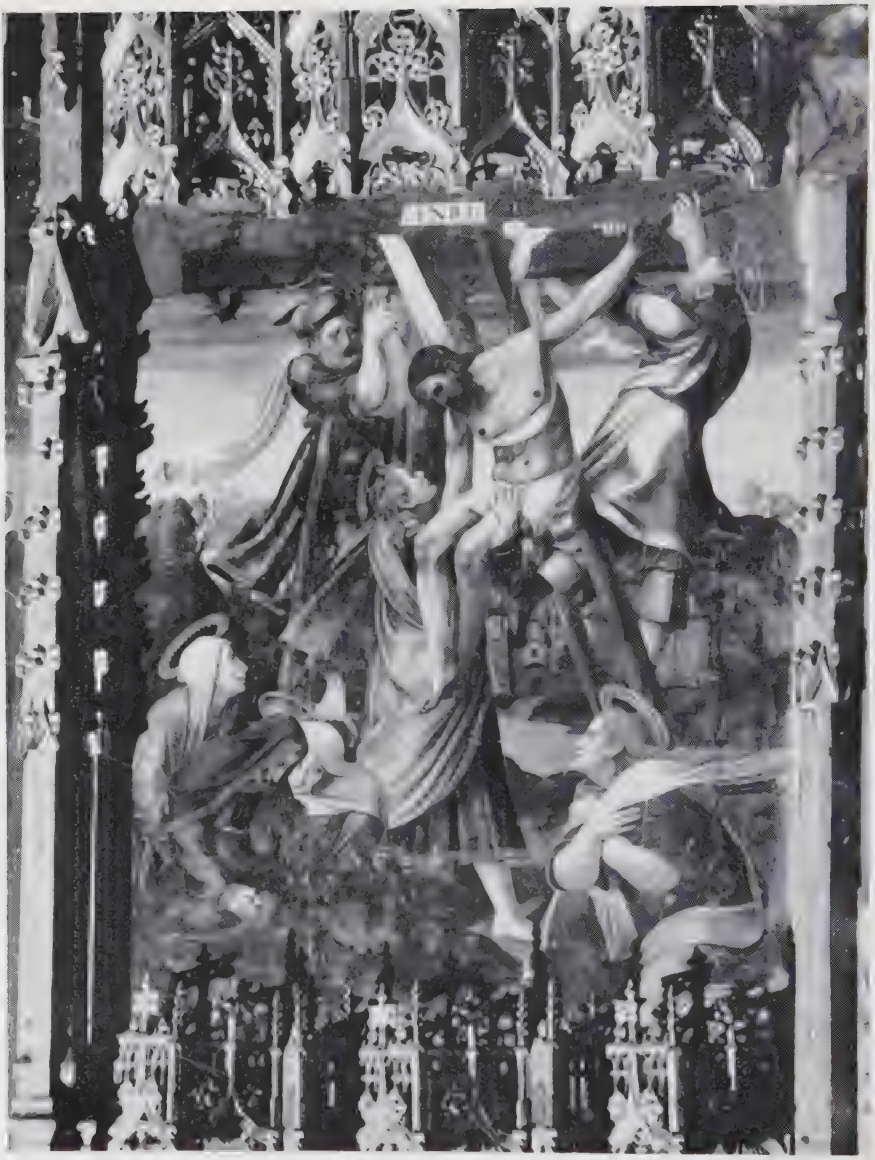

FIG. 66. PEDRO NUNYES. DEPOSITION, SECTION OF RETABLE. CHURCH OF SANTOS JUSTO Y PASTOR, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

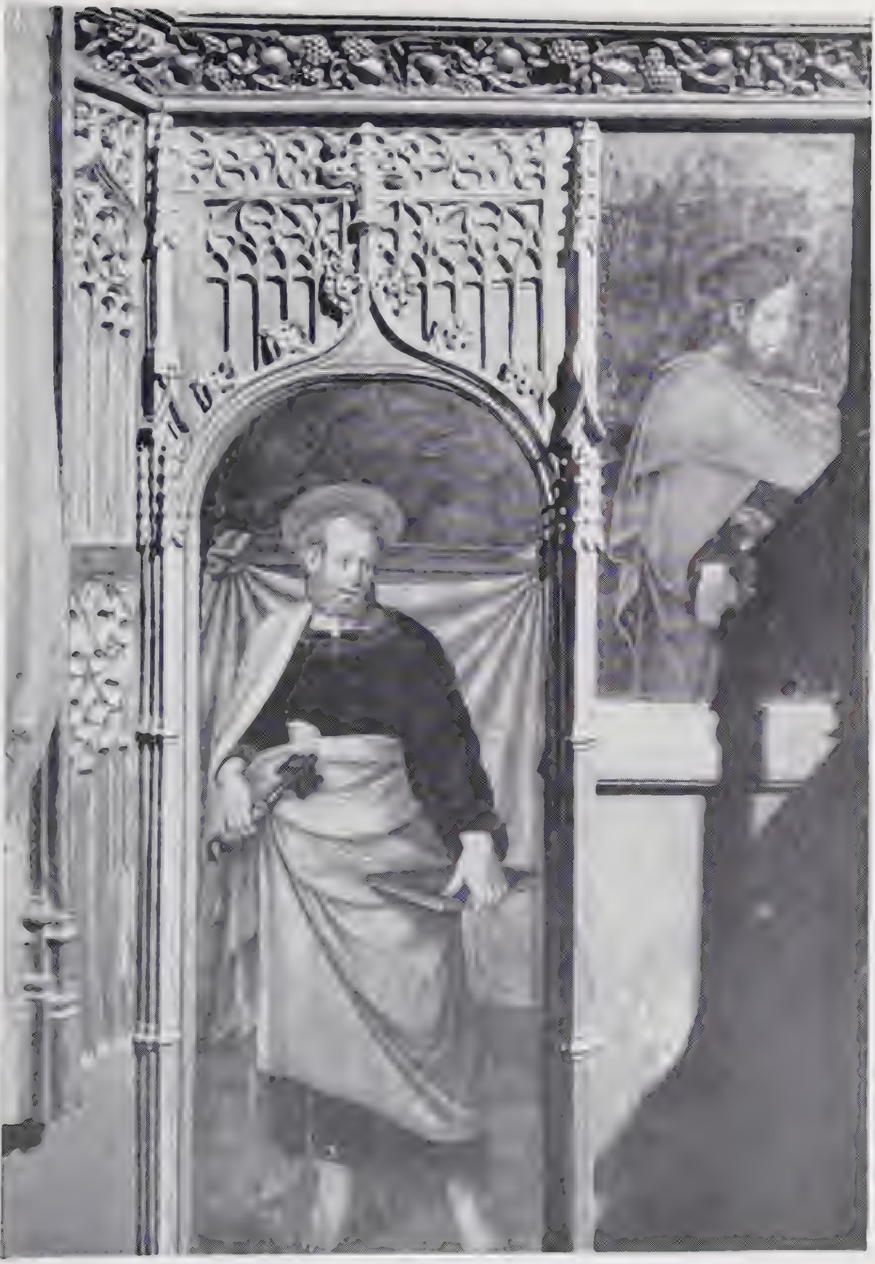

Fig. 67. PEDRO NUNYES. STS. PETER AND THOMAS, SECTION OF RETABLE. CHURCH OF SANTOS JUSTO Y PASTOR, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

honored in the retable over the high altar of his church at Gerona and who there also, through iconographic confusion, is wrongly made into a deacon.[47] The two other busts are of feminine saints, one older and one younger, who, as they carry only books for attributes, cannot be satisfactorily identified. The more elderly at the right might be Elizabeth, the mother of the Baptist, but the Blessed Virgin would hardly be relegated to this subordinate section of an altarpiece as her pendant at the left. Between the horizontal strip and the doors the predella extends to panels large enough to contain, not busts, but half-lengths of St. Thomas the Apostle (?) [48] and the penitent St. Jerome.[49] The frames and canopies by Juan de Bruselas are still composed, as at Capella and Vilasar, of Gothic carvings, and uniquely or at least very exceptionally only this sculptor (and not the painter) was called into service to decorate the *guardapolvos,* where he naturally employed the same lingering mediaeval *motifs* of pure design as in the main body of the structure.

In all probability because Nunyes was not here conditioned by depicting the subjects as events in the life that he knew, the retable in Santos Justo y Pastor exhibits a very considerable progress beyond the virtually contemporary shutters for the silversmiths along the manneristic road, not only in attenuation of bodily proportions but also in *préciosité* of pose and gesture. The most obvious examples are all the participants in the Nativity, the two standing Magi in the Epiphany, the good thief in the Crucifixion, and the Magdalene in the Deposition. The appearance assumed by mannerism in the Annunciation might almost deceive one into mistaking the picture for a production of the school of Fontainebleau. As instances of the passages in a soberer and more primitive style that constantly occur in the output of Nunyes and that, we have argued, should not be deemed indicative of a collaborator, we may choose the Sts. Peter and Paul of the doors, the St. Thomas of the predella, and even the bust of St. Felix. Types of this sort, however, occur in compartments that are otherwise embodiments of the most advanced phases of the Renaissance, e.g., the Nicodemus (?) at the left of the cross in the Deposition, the Joseph of Arimathaea at the head of Christ in the Entombment, and the Christ in the Resurrection, thus providing danger-signals against an acceptance of the dualistic theory. The grief-stricken group at the foot of the cross in the Deposition was suggested, as Angulo[50] has perceived, by Marcantonio's engraving of the theme.

---

[47] See above, p. 81.

[48] I think that I discern in the figure's right hand the carpenter's rule, the emblem of St. Thomas. The two figures were for a time, after the confusion of the civil war, in the collection of Don J. Graells, Barcelona, where they are recorded by Diego Angulo (*Archivo español de arte*, XVII, 1944, p. 330, n. 1); but they have now been restored to their places in the retable.

[49] Madurell (second article, 43–44) follows the report of the pastoral visit to the church in 1549 in identifying the two saints beside Felix with Catherine and Zacharias and the two half-lengths with James Major and John Baptist; but he is demonstrably wrong in the last instance, since his Baptist is most obviously Jerome, and, although we might expect James Major to appear in the retable as the patron of the donor, Jaime de Requeséns, the figure in question reveals none of the very stereotyped attributes of this Apostle. Nor is there any apparent reason for seeing Catherine in the canonized maiden next to St. Felix, and the elderly person on the other side I should judge certainly to be a woman and not therefore the Baptist's father, Zacharias!

The retable at Capella, in which the coöperation of Fernandes is documented, though not visibly detectable, constitutes one of the rare instances in which the extant structure, so far as it is preserved, conforms iconographically, almost without exception, to the detailed specifications of the contract and in which thus there did not occur the deviations from the original plan so frequent in artistic enterprises of the Middle Ages and Renaissance.[51] Its themes honor the Virgin and St. Martin, to both of whom the church is dedicated. The carved, Gothic wooden frames and canopies are said by Ricardo del Arco[52] to have perished in the outbreaks that in 1936 led to the Spanish civil war, but in the state in which I and others saw the altarpiece prior to this date, the whole vertical, central section was occupied by two such *baldacchini*, harboring at the upper level a statue of St. Martin, evidently belonging to the original assemblage, and, at the lower level an image of Mary, a later substitution. Of the painted panels in the rest of the structure, the topmost tier aligns four scenes from the history of St. Martin, his encounter with the beggar, his episcopal consecration, his ultimate persuasion of the emperor Valentinian through the miraculous descent of fire,[53] and his obsequies. The contract reverses the order of these last two events, but either

---

[50] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 329–330.

[51] See vol. VIII, p. 250.

[52] *Catálogo monumental de España, Huesca*, Madrid, 1942, p. 225.

[53] The theme is included in the cycle about St. Martin in the cathedral of Valencia by Nicolás Falcó (cf. my vol. XI, p. 123); but neither my notes taken at Capella nor the available photographs make it *absolutely* certain that this is the subject of the third compartment. The contract asks merely for "some miracle."

Nunyes or some later, logically minded person placed them in their proper chronological sequence. The next two rows unfold eight instead of the orthodox seven Joys of the Virgin, the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Dormition, and Coronation (Figs. 68 and 69). In the predella the three faces of the tabernacle are decorated with Christ carrying the cross, the Virgin, and St. John Evangelist, and at the sides are compartments of the Agony in the Garden, Via Dolorosa, Deposition, and Entombment. It is demanded in the contract that the Christ on the tabernacle display the "Mystery of the Holy Sacrament of the Altar," but, according to my notes made when I was at Capella, He holds instead the cross. To the Sts. Peter and Paul of the doors at the sides of the altar, we have referred in discussing the retable in Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, but the *guardapolvos*, on which the contract calls for effigies of six saints, did not survive even until 1936.

The Nativity is treated in a mode so diverse from the rendering in the retable of Santos Justo y Pastor and so much less in harmony with the temper of the High Renaissance that at first sight it might seem that they could not have been executed by the same artist. It is particularly the Virgin and St. Joseph who hark back to mediaeval norms, and yet there are counterparts for both figures in the other retable. In the Crucifixion, for example, the woman who supports the swooning Mother scarcely differs from the Virgin in the Capella Nativity, and in the Deposition the Nicodemus at the left of the cross is very similar to the foster-father of Our Lord. It is, then, not at all unimaginable that a single painter should have done both versions of the Nativity, purposely seeking variation, and, as a matter of fact, the other participants in the scene at Capella, especially the Child, are thoroughly attuned to the lusty strains of the developed Renaissance. The consequence is that we must not ascribe the Capella version separately to Fernandes any more than we can discern an assistant in the passages that I have indicated in the retable of Santos Justo y Pastor. The Annunciation also exhibits less sympathy with the fashions of mannerism than the rendering in the other retable, and yet many parts in the Capella assemblage are quite as advanced as any that he executed when working at the order of Requeséns. Here and there the panels even betray something of the neurotic perturbation in which the vain endeavor to imitate Michael Angelo's sturdy emotionalism often resulted. So, the soaring of

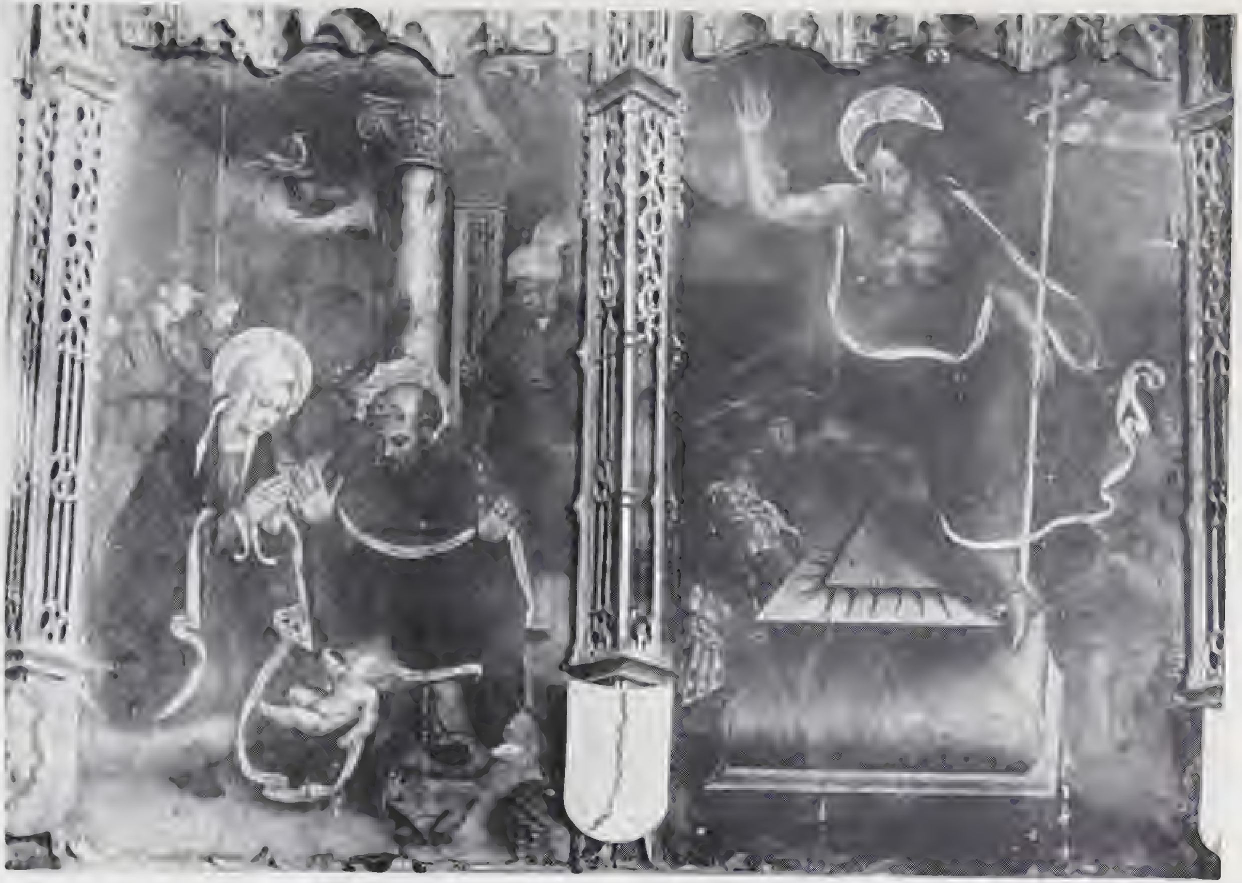

FIG. 68. PEDRO NUNYES. NATIVITY AND RESURRECTION, SECTION OF RETABLE, PARISH CHURCH, CAPELLA
(*Photo. Mas*)

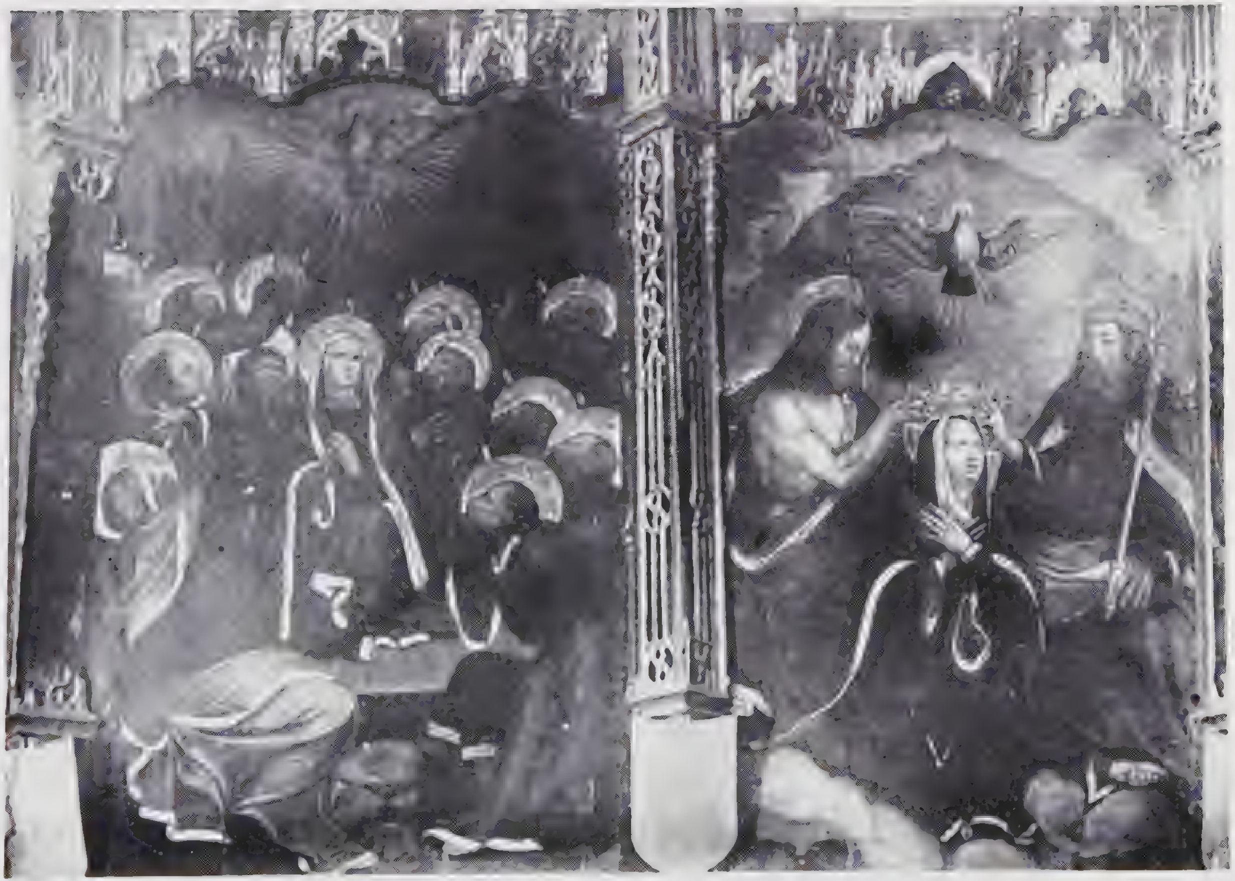

FIG. 69. PEDRO NUNYES. PENTECOST AND CORONATION, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, CAPELLA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Christ over the sepulchre of the Resurrection becomes an agitated flight, in contrast to the rather staid Saviour in the same scene in the retable of Santos Justo y Pastor, and the Apostles in the Pentecost assume strained and melodramatic poses. The human types are echoed back and forth between the Barcelona retable and Capella. The St. John and Magdalene in the Deposition of the former work, for instance, provide parallels for the St. John and the Apostle below him in the Capella Pentecost; and the Apostle in the lower right corner of the Pentecost closely resembles the St. Jerome in the Barcelona predella.

Despite the general adherence of the Capella altarpiece to the High Renaissance, the feeling for symmetrical and ritualistic formality in the representation of the consecration of bishops had become so natural to Spanish aesthetics during the Middle Ages that, as in the shutters for the silversmiths and in the altarpiece of St. Severus, it is retained for the scene of this ceremony in the life of St. Martin. The embossing of flamboyant gold backgrounds and of details, in which Jaime Forner still indulged at Argentona, is abandoned, but unraised gold continues to accent lavishly the borders of garments.

The town of Vilasar de Dalt is also called San Ginés (in Catalan, Sant Genís) de Vilasar because it is under the patronage of a St. Genesius; but there are two early martyrs of this name,[54] and the retable by Nunyes and Fernandes in the *capilla mayor* of the parish church divided the honors almost equally between them, before it was burned in 1936. A fine statue of one of them stood at the centre of the structure, and a diminutive carved image of the other had at some time been set in front of it over the tabernacle; but the attributes carried by the two figures were not sufficiently distinctive to allow me to decide which was which. In any case, the six painted panels at the left were devoted to the St. Genesius who was a young notary or lawyer's clerk of Arles, and the corresponding number at the right to his homonym, a Roman mime. The photographs made by the Mas Archive, prior to its destruction, despite their dimness, and the notes that I took on the spot at my visit to the place in 1930, however meagre by reason of the darkness of the church, permit me to recognize ten of the twelve scenes with relative surety, although a few of them had been worn away almost beyond recognition even before the fatality of 1936.

---

[54] See my vol. IV, p. 636, n. 1. Their stories appear in any of the larger hagiographical compilations, but I may refer especially to Surius (*Historiae seu vitae sanctorum*), to the Bollandists under the day, August 25, when both are commemorated, and to Alonso de Villegas Selvago, *Flos sanctorum*, Madrid, 1593, I, 781–782.

Each set of six was arranged in two vertical sequences of three compartments which appear to have read from the top downward. There was first to be seen the clerk of Arles, moved by the sight of a Christian bound to a tree for torture, declining to pen at the judge's command the order for further executions. Next followed his own arraignment as an adherent of the new faith, and there ensued one of the distinctive elements in his story, the strange refusal of a bishop to baptize him, with the excuse of the regular theological tenet that the blood of martyrdom constitutes an adequate substitute for the sacrament. In the topmost compartment of the second vertical sequence, he was pursued by the judge's henchmen; then came the scene of his decapitation; but the subject of the lowest panel, the sixth and last in the series, I cannot interpret. The outstanding occurrence in the accounts of the other St. Genesius, the Roman actor, is his christening. While engaged in a burlesque of Christian baptism for the entertainment of Diocletian, he was suddenly seized with a conviction of the verities of the Christian faith and expressed a desire to be actually christened in reality then and there upon the stage. The emperor, believing that Genesius planned only a continuation of the travesty, arranged for other actors to impersonate the Christian officiants at the ceremony, but, since they did what the Church intends in the sacrament and used the proper words, the saint was considered, again in conformity with Catholic theology, to be validly baptized. In the first compartment at the right, he was depicted, before Diocletian and the court, as playing the comedy of a simulated illness, in accordance with the texts of the story, and as calling in derision for the rites of baptism; below there was represented the christening of the saint while still in bed; but on this side of the retable, it is again the lowest compartment that I am unable to decipher. The last vertical sequence showed the mime proclaiming his conversion to the emperor, tortured upon the *eculeus*, and as in the end suffering decollation. The saints marshalled on the right piece of the *guardapolvos* were Barbara, Anthony Abbot, Roch, a second virgin martyr, and the Guardian Angel of the Kingdom (?), but the only two that I could distinguish on the left piece were Michael (?) and Sebastian. The predella was devoted to episodes of the Passion, and, as in two of the extant retables by Nunyes, the doors at the sides of the altar remained, with figures of Sts. Peter and Paul.

The retable of Vilasar de Dalt increases but little either our knowledge or appreciation of Nunyes or Fernandes; and indeed in the absence of all but a few detailed photographs and in my own and others' failure to take adequately discriminating notes when studying the original prior to its destruction, we have no means of deciding whether at least here the style of Fernandes could be distinguished from that of his partner. In the youth whom the notary St. Genesius watched being tied to a tree there was a not unsuccessful attempt to grapple with the problem of a full-blown nude of the Renaissance. Nevertheless, the Catalan mediaeval tradition was so potent that in the midst of this mature style of the Cinquecento the notary throughout the six scenes dealing with him was clad in one of the brilliant, old, auric brocades, the principal loud pattern of which was even still presented in arbitrary and unforeshortened frontality for the sake of decorative conspicuousness.

The retable of St. Severus, now in the Diocesan Museum at Barcelona, for which Nunyes and Fernandes contracted in 1541, is the work where a divorce between a more primitive and a more advanced manner seems clearest, and yet once more it is entirely possible that a single artist, Nunyes, should have possessed enough elasticity to have included both modes in his stride and that the partner should have been little more than an assisting brush to reproduce his dominating companion's style.

A considerable part of the retable is the achievement of an unidentified sculptor, the polychromy of which the two associates were required by the contract [55] to execute, the central image of St. Severus, the *remate* with the bust of God the Father, the figures of the four Evangelists on the lower level of the uprights, and the four Fathers of the western Church at the higher level. The painted compartments are confined to four episodes from the life of St. Severus in the main section of the structure, and to the predella spreading out over three compartments the ceremony of the translation of his body from the monastery of San Cugat del Vallés to the cathedral of Barcelona. The scenes from the life of St. Severus, which are left in the contract to the arbitrament of the authorities of the Hospital, begin with the representation of the dove resting upon his head to indicate him

[55] See above, p. 175.

as the divine choice for the see of Barcelona when, already in priest's orders, he had through pious curiosity entered the church where the election was being held[56] (Fig. 70). Three ecclesiastics as well as, anachronously, the five Councillors of Barcelona are depicted as praying at an altar for the guidance of the Holy Spirit; upon St. Severus, humbly lurking in the background, the dove makes one of its repeated descents; and a number of citizens of Barcelona in the foreground and at the left side are shown in attitudes of amazement or meditation. The second compartment displays his episcopal consecration, maintaining, as in the case of St. Martin at Capella, the old symmetrical composition for such themes; his martyrdom takes up the third panel; and to the last division is consigned the miracle that he performed long after his death, his nocturnal appearance to King Martin the Humane of Aragon and Catalonia at the beginning of the fifteenth century to assure him of the cure of a wound in his leg, for which in despair the physicians had advised amputation[57] (Fig. 71). In thanksgiving the monarch negotiated the transfer of the relics of St. Severus from the monastery of San Cugat del Vallés to the cathedral of Barcelona, and the solemn procession of these relics on August 4, 1405, occupies, as we have noted, the whole predella (Fig. 72). Prominent in the throng of clerics and laity taking part in the function are, according to historical fact, Martin himself and his son of the same name, king of Sicily, who did not live to succeed him in Aragon. They are shown carrying the two front poles of the reliquary, and their queens, with ladies in waiting, stand forth from the procession's closing section in the left compartment of the predella. A serried aggregation of clerics stop in the compartment at the right to interrupt the march by making a "station."

It is specified in the contract that the representation of the translation of the relics, unless the two partners judge artistic considerations to demand otherwise, shall be based upon the rendering of the subject in a now lost retable probably done in the second quarter of the fifteenth century for the chapel of St. Severus in the cathedral; and

---

[56] For the piquant details of this event and for the study of St. Severus in general, see the Bollandists under the day of his feast, November 6. They discuss also the difficult question of whether he lived under Diocletian, under the Visigothic king, Euric, or even as late as the seventh century. The subjects of the paintings are elaborately analyzed likewise by Durán in his article, and cf. also Llorenç Riber, *Els sants de Catalunya*, Barcelona, I (1919), 73.

[57] See especially A. V. Domenec, *Historia general de los santos y varones ilustres en santidad del principado de Cataluña*, Gerona, 1630, p. 207.

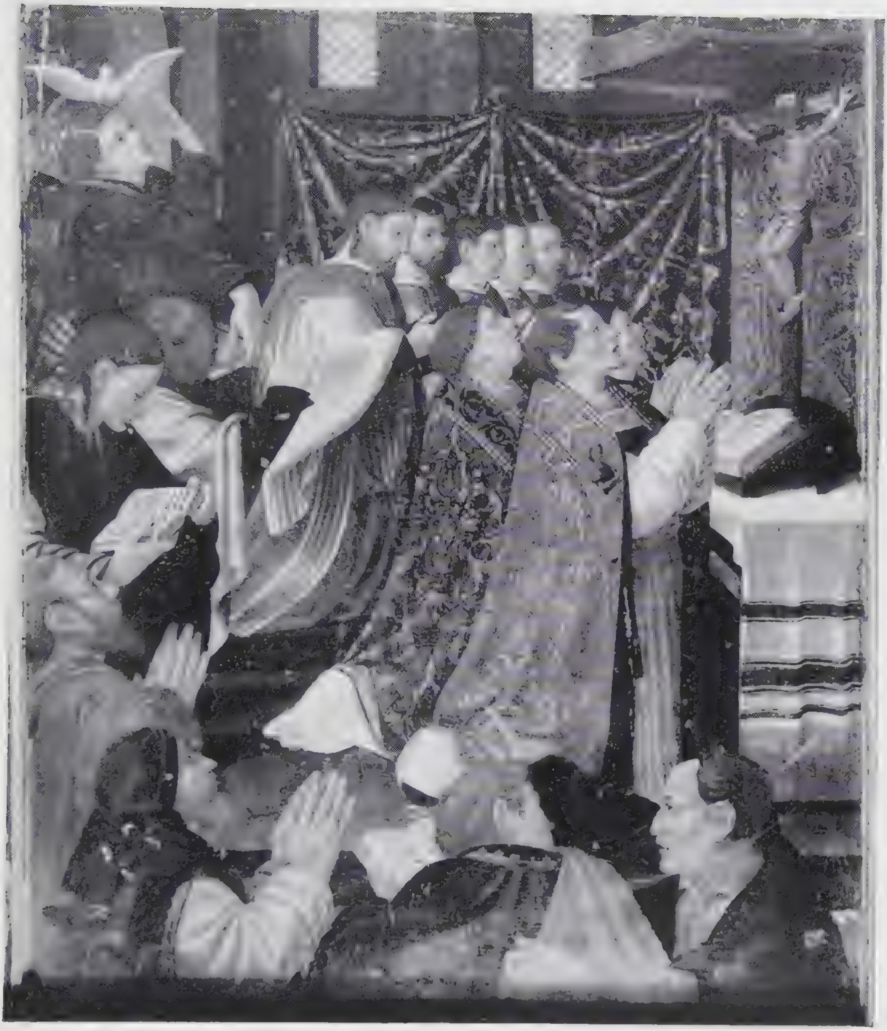

Fig. 70. PEDRO NUNYES. THE SELECTION OF ST. SEVERUS AS BISHOP OF BARCELONA, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA

(*Photo. Mas*)

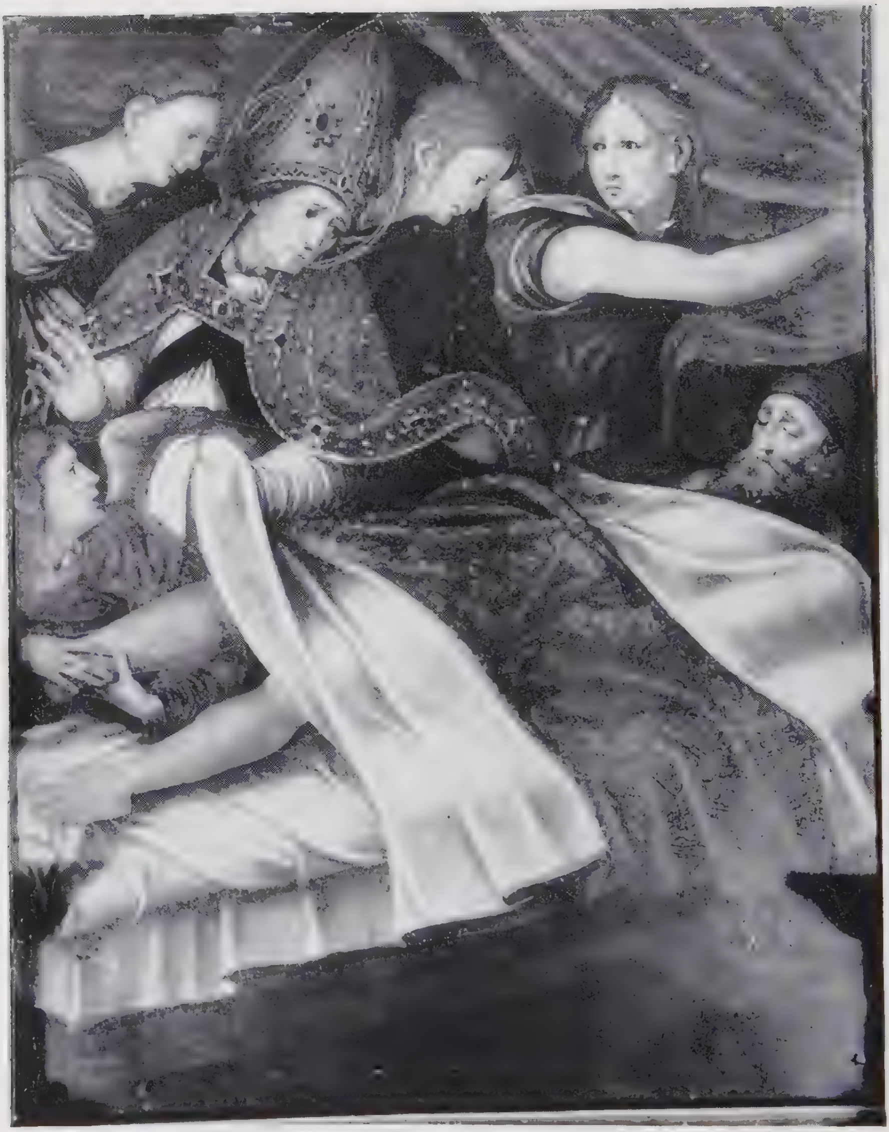

Fig. 71. PEDRO NUNYES. APPEARANCE OF ST. SEVERUS TO KING MARTIN THE HUMANE, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

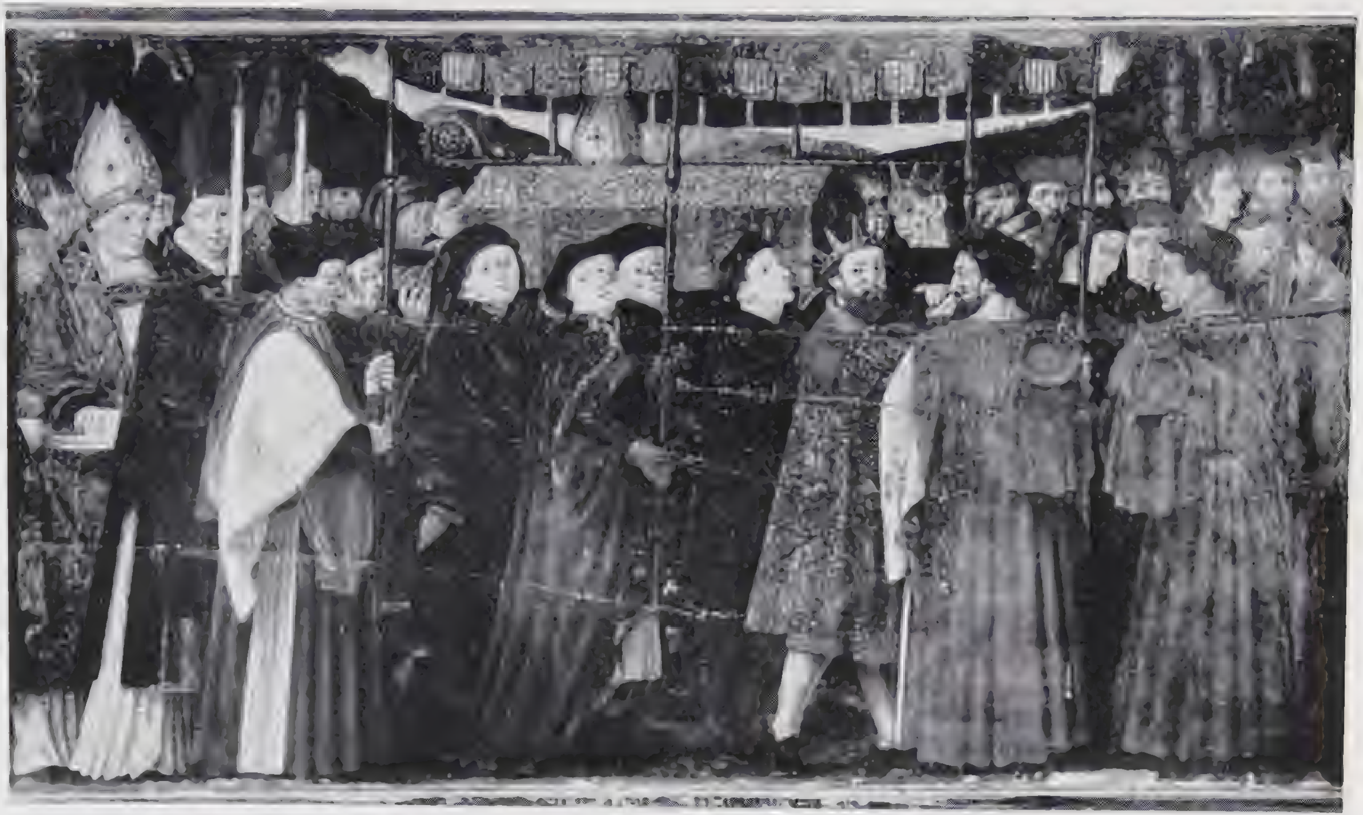

FIG. 78. PEDRO NUNYES. TRANSLATION OF RELICS OF ST. SEVERUS. SECTION OF PREDELLA OF RETABLE.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Durán [58] maintains that in this earlier retable the figure of King Martin, who is recorded to have been there depicted, would have been a fairly accurate portrait and that the authors of the retable for the Hospital in the sixteenth century would have copied this likeness. The earlier retable, however, was made some thirty years after the sovereign's death; in European painting of the first half of the fifteenth century faithful portraiture was neither a desideratum nor as yet evolved; and Durán himself admits that Martin is reputed to have been short and fat, very different, therefore, from the monarch of ordinary stature who beholds the vision of St. Severus and helps in the procession to support his casket.

The sections that strike one, perhaps wrongly, as more retrogressive, are the scenes of the election and consecration of St. Severus and the procession of his relics. If we reasonably, however, contend that the style throughout the retable is fundamentally homogeneous, we can explain the more primitive effect in the consecration, as we have seen in the similar compartments for the silversmiths and at Capella, by the painter's decision to retain the mediaeval treatment of such themes. Likewise in the election and procession the nature of the subjects would forestall the mannerism and perturbation that characterize so many other productions of Nunyes. The representation of the participants in these scenes as persons of the sixteenth century in contemporary costume would exclude [59] the license in the manipulation of the human form and the pseudo-classical draperies permitted in the Biblical stories at Capella and in Santos Justo y Pastor, and the general emotional excitement of the style of Nunyes would be inevitably foreign not only to a solemn procession, as in the strikingly analogous panel in the shutters for the silversmiths, but also to the group of praying clerics and laymen who constitute almost the whole composition in the episode of the election. In this latter compartment, however, the heads of the actors fall for the most part within the fully evolved norms of the Renaissance, recalling the countenances of the Apostles in the Capella Pentecost. The type of the youth depicted as reading in the lower left corner is repeated in two of the angels accompanying St. Severus in his appearance to Martin the Humane, and yet the whole scene of this appearance is one of the parts of the retable most obviously incorporating the developed modes of the Cinquecento. The specimens of the fusion of an ostensibly less and more advanced manner within the same compartment by no means ends here. In what, for instance, look like conservative sections, there emerge types, such as in the consecration the two clerics at the extreme right or in the procession the two queens and the profile of the gentleman in front of King Martin, which are emancipated from primitive restrictions.

---

[58] *Vida cristiana*, XVI (1928–1929), 426–427.

[59] See above, p. 181.

A number of works are attributable to Pedro Nunyes on internal evidence.

It seems impossible to question Angulo's [60] visual sagacity in claiming for him a distinguished retable which, until recently in its original location in the church of the Piedad at La Seo de Urgel, belongs now to the Collection of the Conde de Egara at Tarrasa. Between 1530 and 1533 the prebendary of the cathedral of this town, Juan Pedro Correa, constructed a chapel in the house which, attached to the cathedral's cloister, had long ago been granted as an appanage to the clergy of the institution; and, since it was for this chapel that the retable was made, it is approximately dated. The donation of Correa inspired the magnanimous and pious enterprise of rebuilding at once the whole house as a church, which came to be known as the Iglesia de la Piedad and in which Correa's chapel, with its retable, occupied a position at the left of the nave.[61] The Passion of Christ constitutes the retable's principal theme, incorporated in the Via Dolorosa at the centre of the lower tier in the structure's main body and the Crucifixion similarly placed in the upper tier, between, at the left, the Betrayal and, at the right, Christ at the Column [62] adored by the penitent St. Peter. In the compartment that at the left flanks the Via Dolorosa St. Gabriel presents the kneeling Correa, and in the balancing piece at the right, the best part of the retable (Fig. 73), a lady, probably one of his relatives or a joint donor, is correspondingly shown under the patronage of St. Joseph, who carries as his emblem a staff and the miraculously leafed rod of his courtship.[63] The subject in the

---

[60] *Pintura del Renacimiento*, Madrid, 1954, p. 178, vol. XII of the series *Ars Hispaniae*.

[61] For the data, see the article on the church by Mossén Pedro Pujol in *Analecta sacra tarraconensia*, I (1925), 331–352.

[62] Vol. IX, p. 838.

[63] In the ordinary accounts the flowers which his rod put forth in his rivalry with Mary's other suitors and which do not appear in the Seo de Urgel panel are emphasized rather than the leaves; but I have already noted (vol. VIII, p. 25, n. 1) an instance where the branch carried by St. Joseph lacks even the leaves.

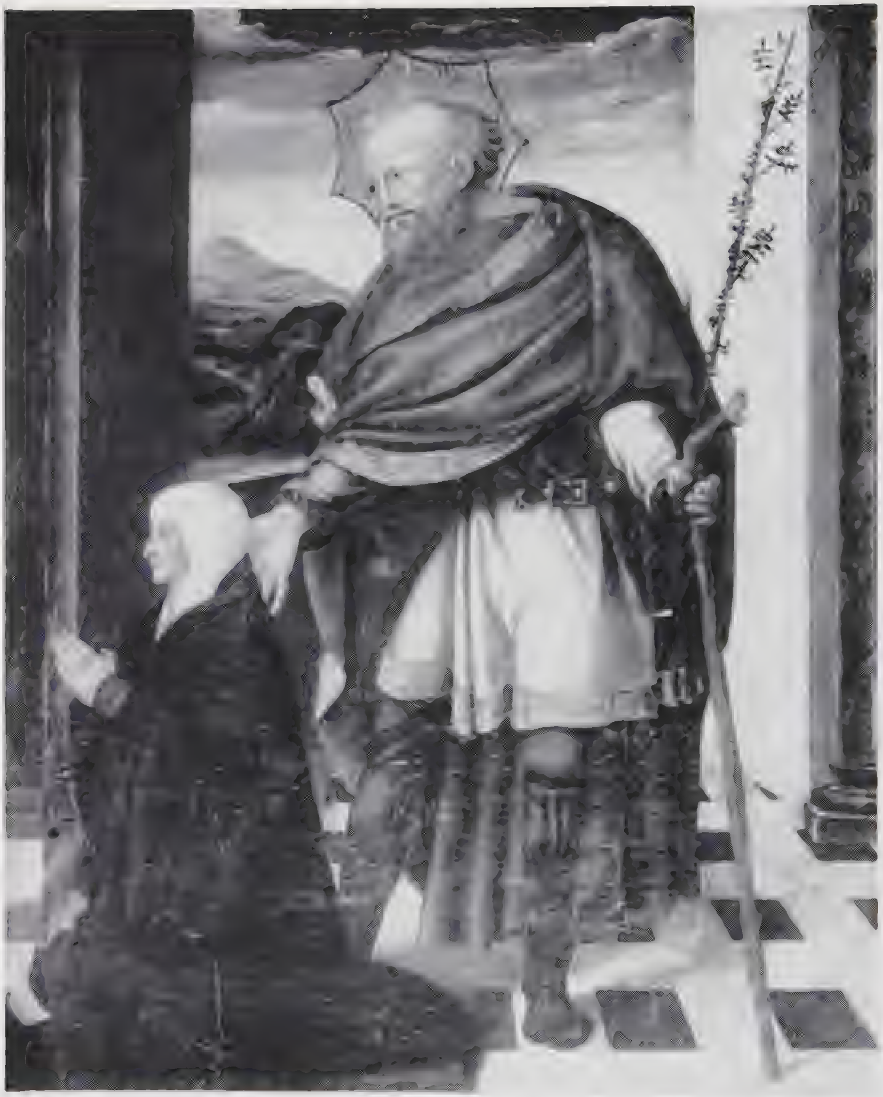

FIG. 73. PEDRO NUNYES. ST. JOSEPH AND A LADY OF THE DONOR'S FAMILY, SECTION OF RETABLE. COLLECTION OF THE CONDE DE EGARA, TARRASA
(*Photo. Mas*)

middle of the predella, the Madonna of the Milk, with the Child grasping a cross held by an angel, repeats a composition evolved by Juan Gascó [64] and continued by his son; and the lateral compartments, at this level in the altarpiece, display as half-lengths St. Andrew and St. Jerome in the desert. The fine, Plateresque framing is also preserved, and on each of its four uprights in the predella there is painted an escutcheon with the donor's *armes parlantes*, a leather strap (the Spanish word for which is *correa*) arranged in a circle and ending below in a buckle. [65] It is to be noted that in the Betrayal St. Peter's amputation of the ear of the high priest's servant is strangely made principal and the arrest of Christ relegated to the background, an anomaly which, taken in conjunction with the introduction of the scene of the Apostle's repentance before Christ at the Column and the presence of his brother, St. Andrew, in the predella, suggests a reference to one of the donor's given names, Pedro.

We have already [66] had occasion to reject a tentative attribution of the retable to Juan Gascó. Madurell [67] surmises that the author might be a Juan Garí, recorded as active at La Seo de Urgel from 1540–1549; but, although it is possible that Garí was already established in the town at the probably somewhat earlier date when the retable was executed, no document connects him with it. The demands of Nunyes to the honor, moreover, are undeniable, and it must not be forgotten that his vogue at La Seo de Urgel is demonstrated by the order which he received for a lost altarpiece in the Dominican church of the town.[68] One feels himself forthwith in the presence of his manner, and the impression is corroborated by concrete identities at every point. The St. Andrew, for example, repeats the mussy-haired type of the St. Joseph in the Nativity of the altarpiece in Santos Justo y Pastor, Barcelona; the aged Simon of Cyrene in the Via Dolorosa has not only a bearded head that is a commonplace in the master's output but also a tragic gaze that looks out at us from many of his characters such as the St. Peter in the just mentioned altarpiece; the Christ of the Resurrection in this altarpiece in full frontal view and with sleekly parted hair furnishes a counterpart for the Saviour of the Betrayal in the assemblage from La Seo de Urgel, and the robust body and head of the Second Person of the Trinity in the Capella Coronation are repeated in His form at the column in the retable that now concerns us; Gabriel presenting Juan Pedro Correa belongs to a kind of handsome youthful personage frequently used by Nunyes, as for the reading lad at the left in the scene of election in the retable of St. Severus; and the angel holding the cross beside the Madonna in the predella has a face and coiffure that the painter admired, illustrated by the celestial spirits in the Nativity in the church of Santos Justo y Pastor.

---

[64] See above, p. 43.

[65] When I visited the church of the Piedad in 1930, the panels of the donor and his presumptive relative were interchanged in position, and for the Crucifixion, which had been removed to the sacristy, a much later painting of St. Joseph and the Child had been substituted.

[66] P. 14.

[67] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, IV, 1–2 (1946), 146.

[68] See above, p. 175.

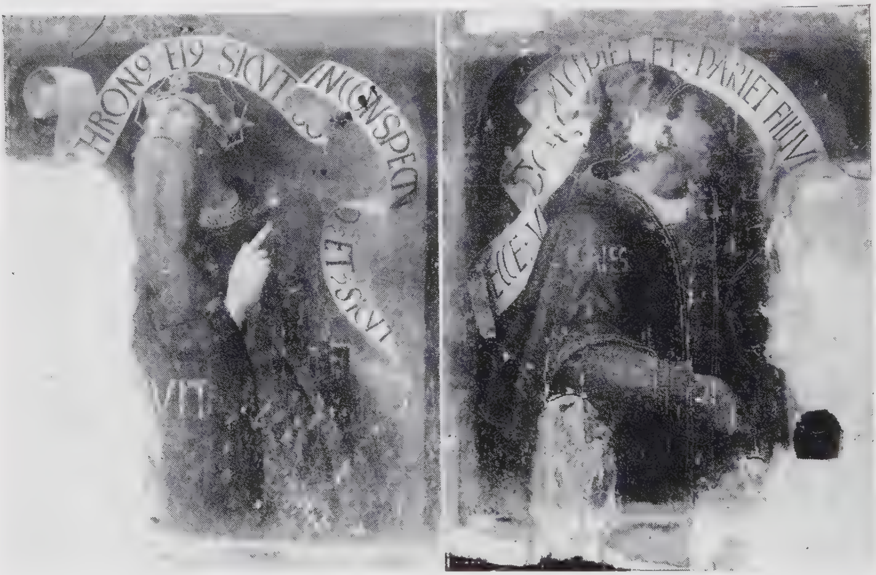
HRONO EIUS SICUT ... IN CONSPECTU ... ET SICUT
ECCE V... CONCIPIET ET PARIET FILIUM

FIG. 74. PEDRO NUNYES. DAVID AND ISAIAH. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, LÉRIDA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Not only the general style of Nunyes but even detailed resemblances to his documented achievements emerge in fine half-lengths of David and Isaiah, now in the Diocesan Museum of Lérida (Fig. 74) but deriving from the otherwise destroyed retable over the high altar of the parish church at near-lying Castelldásens (also shortened into Castelldáns). The David should be compared especially with such a type as the Eternal Father of the Coronation at Capella, and the Isaiah with several of the actors in the panel of the election of St. Severus and particularly with this canonized bishop himself in the scene of his martyrdom. About both Prophets inscribed banderoles still flutter in the old mediaeval fashion. The verse chosen for David is from Psalm LXXXIX, 37, "Thronus eius sicut Sol in conspectu meo, etc." The scroll of Isaiah gives expression to the familiar prophecy of the virgin-birth in his chapter VII, 14.

In the case of a Nativity in the Collection of the Marquis of Santillana (the Duque del Infantado) at Madrid (Fig. 75), Angulo[69] hesitates whether to choose Nunyes himself or a pupil for the author, but, as in so many other instances, I am willing to go beyond his scholarly caution and to argue for the former alternative. All the types seem too close to those of his soundly authenticated productions to admit of any other opinion, the St. Joseph, for instance, absolutely repeating the St. Peter of the Capella altarpiece. The background is constituted by one of the elaborate studies of architecture of the High Renaissance to which his other works have accustomed us, and the figuration of the haloes also conforms to his practices. The advanced nature of the style would imply a date at least as late as that of the version of the theme in the retable in Santos Justo y Pastor.

5. A Work by Enrique Fernandes

The fresco that this master alone executed in 1545[70] in the cathedral of Barcelona as a background for the tombs of Ramón Berenguer I and his countess (Fig. 76) comprises too scant an amount of figure-painting, as we have seen, to enable us to define his separate, personal style, if he indeed possessed a manner that did not merely echo the procedures of Nunyes; but it constitutes almost as important a piece of successful architectural illusionism as the ornamentation of the Antesala of the Sala Capitular in the cathedral of Toledo by Juan de Borgoña and his associates. He has conceived a kind of façade of the Corinthian order, formed of two great niches from the bottom

---

[69] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 330, n. 1. I have neither seen other works in private collections at Barcelona that Angulo ascribes to him nor been able to obtain photographs of them, a "Historia de un Santo Pontífice" belonging to C. Rodríguez Andreu and a Holy Family in the possession of M. Mateu. The Santiago (really St. Thomas) and St. Jerome formerly in the Graells Collection, Barcelona, that Angulo assigns to Nunyes, I have already discussed, p. 186, n. 48.

[70] See above, p. 177.

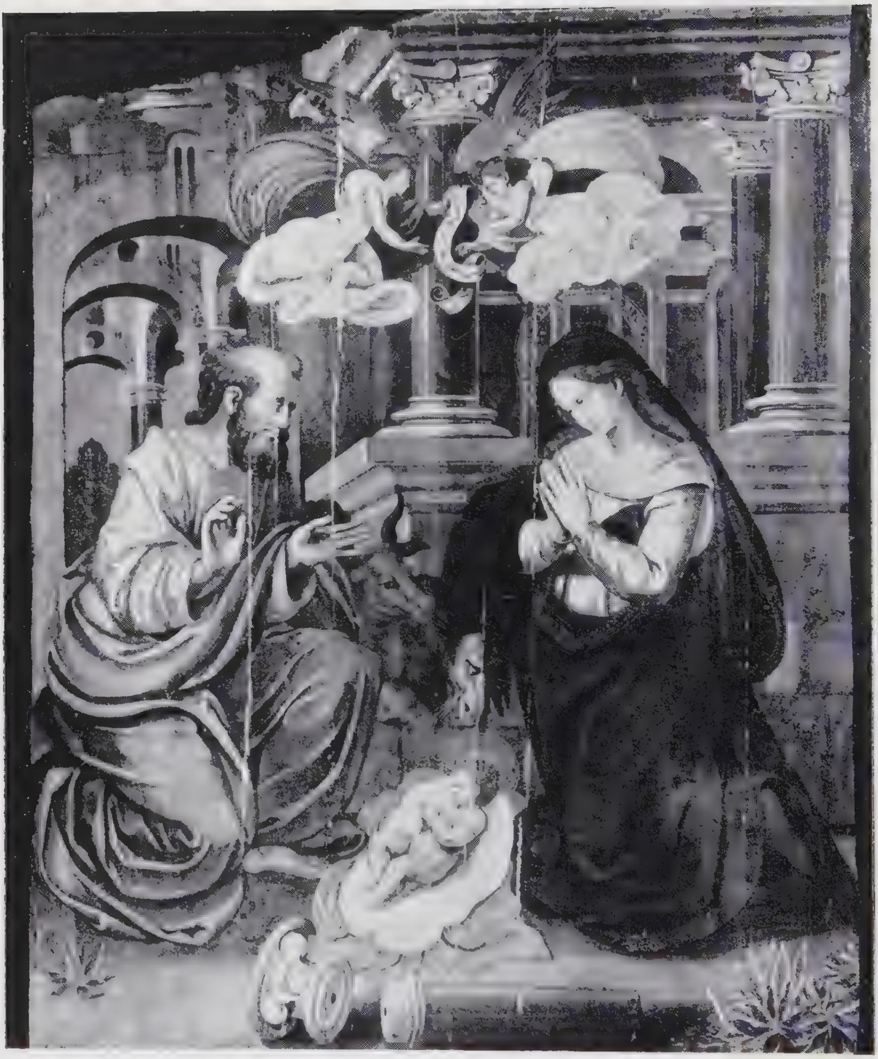

FIG. 75. PEDRO NUNYES. NATIVITY. SANTILLANA COLLECTION, MADRID
(*Photo. Moreno*)

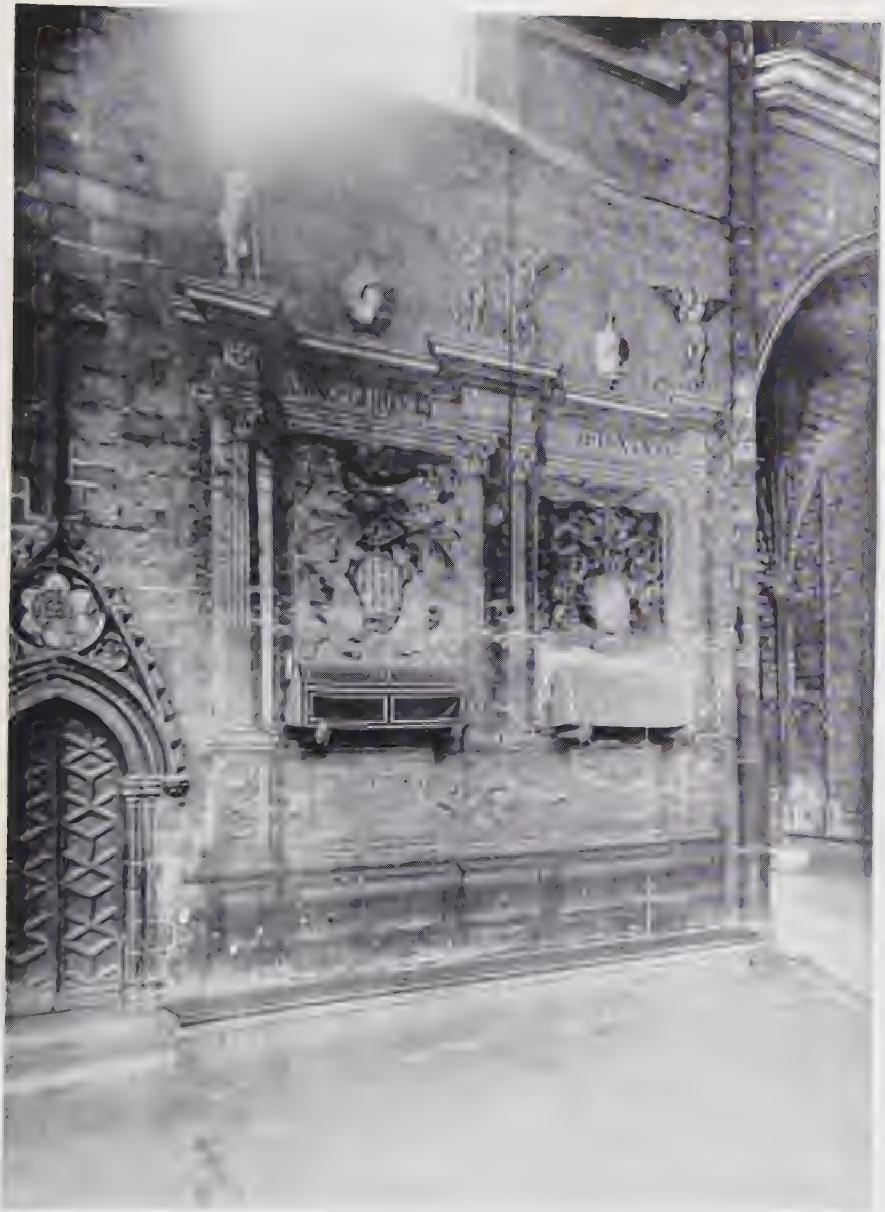

Fig. 76. ENRIQUE FERNANDES. FRESCO ON TOMBS OF RAMÓN BERENGUER I AND HIS COUNTESS, CATHEDRAL, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

of each of which projects a sarcophagus above the high and stately base that he has set under his counterfeited columns. The spaces in the niches over the sarcophagi are decorated with magnificent passages of heraldry, and in conformity to the pompous temperament of the Renaissance Enrique completes the embellishment of the wall with four mourning *putti* on the *ressauts* of his entablature and with two handsome simulated funereal urns set on the cornice between them. The inscriptions on the base in honor of the count and his wife are additions or substitutions of the year 1786 at the time when the present sarcophagi took the place of those of the sixteenth century, which had fallen into decay.

SECTION 2

INDIGENOUS PAINTERS

CHAPTER VIII

JAIME FORNER

1. His Biography

Happy turns of the wheel of fortune not only have made Jaime Forner into a definite personality by the preservation of two documented works, one from the region of Barcelona and the other in Roussillon, but they have also revealed, through the stylistic unity of the two works, that the painter of this name active in Roussillon is identical with his better known, Barcelonese homonym. The production in Roussillon is the retable over the high altar of the little church of Notre Dame de las Gradas in the village of Marcevol close to Arboussols, just northeast of Prades, having been thither transferred from its original, corresponding position in the church of the once important abbey at Marcevol, also dedicated to the Virgin.[1] The authentication of the retable is obtained through an entry in a book of a notary at the near-lying town of Vinça to the effect that the painter "Jacobus Forner" on May 29, 1527, signed a receipt for payment for a "retabulum Beate Marie (= Beatae Mariae) de Marcivolo."[2] So far as the language of the entry goes, the reference might be to a lost retable for the church of Notre Dame de las Gradas instead of the abbey, but, if such had been the meaning, the phrase "de las Gradas" would almost certainly have been appended to "Marie," and the words "a retable of Blessed Mary of Marcevol," without further specification, would naturally apply to a painting for the abbey as the more celebrated sacred institution in the place. In any case, the coincidence of the style with that of Forner's works in Spanish Catalonia shows that the record has to do with the extant retable, which has been moved from the abbey to Notre Dame de las Gradas.

---

[1] See my vol. I, pp. 127–130.

[2] The knowledge and content of the document, as well as the actual existence and photograph of the retable, constitute one of the many debts that I owe to Professor Marcel Durliat, who subsequently has published the material in his important book, *Arts anciens du Roussillon, peinture*, Perpignan, 1954, p. 146. Though not cognizant of the Marcevol retable and therefore without stylistic confirmation, J. M. Madurell had suggested that the Roussillon and Barcelona dates do not conflict with the possibility that we have to do with one and the same painter: *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 31–32.

He is described in the entry as a painter of Vinça, and, in a contract of 1524 for a lost retable, including a statue of St. Petronilla by his own hand, in the chapel which, dedicated to her, belonged to the woolcombers in the cathedral of Perpignan,[3] his designation is as a painter of this capital of the province; but, since artists in the documents were not infrequently denominated from places where they temporarily resided, we cannot argue that he was born or lived as a permanent citizen in either town. Because, however, allusions to his employment in Roussillon antedate his appearance at Barcelona in 1531, it is extremely probable that he began his professional career in the former region, of which he may or may not have been a native, and then, for some reason now undiscoverable, sought patronage in, or was actually summoned to, the more southerly parts of Catalonia. Another record carries back his vogue in Roussillon as far as August 11, 1516, when he agreed to do a non-extant retable for the church of St. André at Bigerannes, near Sainte Marie east of Perpignan.[4]

The documented work done for the region of Barcelona and now in the Diocesan Museum of the city is the retable for the high altar of the church at Santa Inés de Malanyanes, near Argentona (northeast of the Catalan capital). The sculptor Juan Romeu was given in 1527 the commission for the carved setting of the altarpiece, but, when on May 1, 1535, Forner first contracted to complete it, he undertook not only to execute the paintings but also to increase the structure's size and, proving again that he exercised likewise the profession of sculpture, to make the central wooden statue of St. Agnes, as well as to do the additional parts of the frames. He assumed likewise the task of gilding all the carvings in the retable, but, by reason of difficulties in regard to minor financial details, he did not finally sign the contract for his whole labor on the monument until May 9, 1536.[5] Our knowledge of him in this section of Catalonia, however, commences at an earlier date, 1531, when he began to collaborate with Nicolás de Credensa and with an Antonio Rupit on the retable of the *capilla mayor* in the parish church of Argentona itself, a work which, though burned during the Spanish civil war, had luckily been partially photographed by the Mas Archive and examined by students (including me, in 1930) before its destruction. We shall subsequently contend that the paintings in this retable were at least very largely executed by Forner rather than by his partners. The contract of the sculptor Juan Romeu, who joined also in the Malanyanes enterprise, for the woodcarvings in the retable of Argentona, namely the statue of St. Julian at the centre and the frames for the paintings, is dated in 1524, nine years after the new church on the spot was begun in 1515 and fifteen years before the final consecration of the edifice in 1539,[6] but the agreement with the painters Forner, Credensa, and Rupit was not signed until 1531.[7] In this same year Forner undertook to do the polychromy of the sculptured retable by Martín Díez in the Lonja del Mar at Barcelona.

---

[3] F. Monsalvatje y Fossas, *El Obispado de Elna*, III (Olot, 1913), 155, and Durliat, *op. cit.*, 148.

[4] *Ibid.*, III, 13, and Durliat, *op. cit.*, 148.

[5] Madurell, *op. cit.*, 21–31.

For our understanding of his achievements, it will be necessary to review, not the whole list of his lost retables and other activities which are well summarized here and there in Madurell's discussions of Pedro Nunyes and his contemporaries,[8] but only the data that have real bearing upon his artistic personality. We have already had occasion to note[9] that in 1533 he and Credensa were called upon to give their expert opinions in regard to the merits of the paintings in the retable of San Ginés de Vilasar by Pedro Nunyes and Enrique Fernandes. In the document that mentions this fact Forner is described as then dwelling at near-lying Mataró, but in other records of the period he is denominated a citizen of Barcelona, manifestly his principal residence. One of the notices showing that he chiefly lived in this place is found in his contract of 1540 or 1541 to do a retable for the *capilla mayor* of the church of Sta. Eulalia at Hospitalet, a suburb of the city,[10] but he evidently did not carry out the order or finished only a part of it, since in 1568 the painter Ramón Puig was honored with a commission for an altarpiece at exactly the same spot.[11] On August 23, 1542,[12] Forner again in company with Credensa approved the ultimate payment to Nunyes and Fernandes for their retable in the Hospital of Ecclesiastics at Barcelona. We last hear of him when in 1555 he made his will on January 7 and when after his burial the will was probated on January 29.

---

[6] F. Carreras y Candi, *Argentona histórica*, Barcelona, 1891, pp. 73–74; and J. M. Madurell, *Los contratos de obras en los protocolos notariales y su aportación á la historia de la arquitectura*, in *Colegio Notarial de Barcelona, Estudios históricos y documentos de los archivos de protocolos*, I (1948), 142–143.

[7] Cels Gomis, *Provincia de Barcelona*, in the series edited by F. Carreras y Candi, *Geografía general de Catalunya*, p. 301; and an article by Carreras in the *Diario de Barcelona*, August 30, 1903.

[8] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 29–30 and 55–57; II, 1 (1944), 25–26 and 29; and II, 3 (1944), 21–32 and 56–57.

[9] See above, p. 173.

[10] Madurell, *op. cit.*, I, 3 (1943), 56.

[11] Madurell, *op. cit.*, II, 1 (1944), 26, n. 161.

[12] See above, p. 175, and the article by Durán in *Vida cristiana*, XVI (1928–1929), 427.

Although we owe the documentary allusions to Forner's death to Madurell, the Catalan scholar to whose investigations we have referred in the preceding paragraphs, he confusingly mentions activities of the artist after this date. As early as 1553, a Jaime Forner had contracted to gild a retable at San Vicente de Malla in the diocese of Vich, the paintings of which were done by the immigrant from Italy, Pietro Paolo di Montalbergo, but he acknowledged payment for the task on March 9, 1555, subsequent to our master's decease![13] A man of the same Christian name and cognomen agreed on August 24, 1559, to execute, in partnership with another painter of Barcelona, Juan Arissó, a retable for the high altar of the parish church at San Pedro de Octaviá (near San Cugat del Vallés).[14] On August 12, 1557, a debt of a Jaime Forner to be paid from money that he had received for assisting Pedro Serafí in the painting of a retable of St. Romanus in the church of the town of Lloret de Mar (south of Gerona, on the sea) was cancelled; and, if the actual agreement for settling the debt, which is not accurately dated in a preceding document,[15] was drawn up, as is probable, shortly before, we are provided with another instance of posthumous (!) performances of our artist. In any case, the Lloret retable, of which three compartments are preserved, shows no traces of his collaboration. Unless the year given for his decease, 1555, is a misprint, the subsequent notices must have to do with a younger painter of the same name, as we have found to be true in the case of Nicolás de Credensa. The likelihood of the existence of a second Jaime Forner is increased by a fact that Madurell does not include in the biography the marriage, in 1556, of a painter thus called to a widow;[16] and the first Jaime Forner, even if he had survived after 1555, would have reached so advanced an age as to make a matrimonial adventure improbable.

[13] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 29 and 30, and III, 3 (1945), 205.

[14] *Ibid.*, I, 3 (1943), 56–57.

[15] *Ibid.*, II, 3 (1944), 56–57.

[16] See J. Mas in *Boletín de la Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, VI (1911–1912), 315.

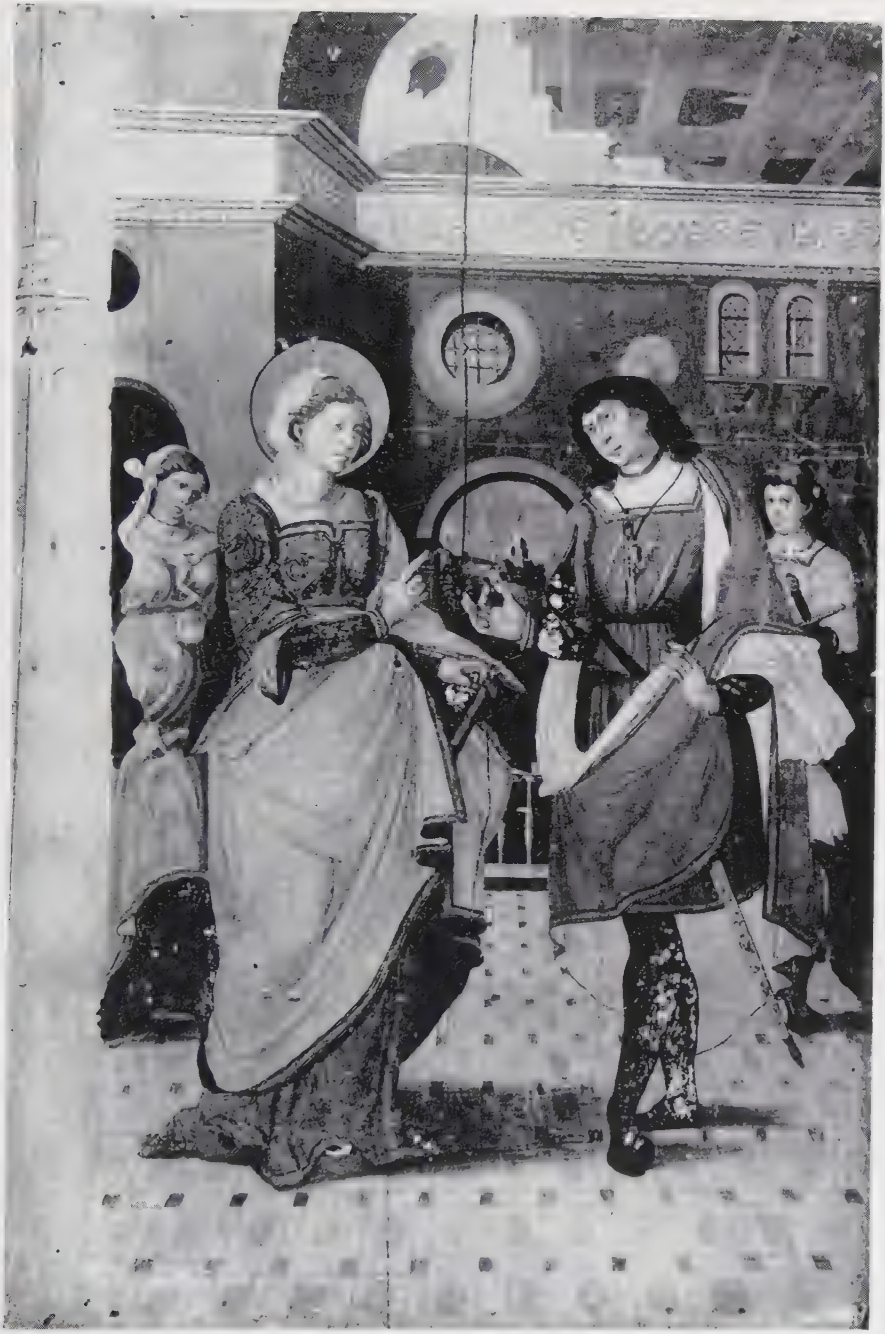

FIG. 77. JAIME FORNER. ST. AGNES REJECTING HER SUITOR, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

2. The Works of Forner

It will be advisable first to establish in our minds a conception of his style by analyzing his long known and soundly authenticated productions in the general region of Barcelona, so that we may utilize this knowledge to show by comparison the presence of precisely the same manner in the earlier retable at Marcevol and thus demonstrate the new fact of the identity of the Jaime Forner of Roussillon with his homonym of the later documents. Of the six panels that from his retable at Santa Inés de Malanyanes have reached the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, three come from the main body of the structure, naturally setting forth events in the life of Agnes, which the terms of the contract [17] prescribe in general for this part of the altarpiece, while leaving the specification of each actual event to the arbitrament of the church's parishioners; and it turns out that for the extant principal compartments the following subjects were chosen. First she rejects the offer of marriage from the son of the prefect of Rome (Fig. 77); next, in the brothel where the prefect had placed her in nakedness to reduce her obstinacy, she sits reading in a breviary under the protection of an angel and in the white vesture with which God had miraculously clothed her shame, while at her feet the devil throttles to death her suitor who had now come to take by force what she would not willingly give and while other frequenters of the house of ill fame look on with amazement through a door in the background; and, last, there is telescoped with her final decollation the ordeal by the fire which instead divides to attack the two groups of her persecutors. In this scene of martyrdom her soul, received by the Eternal Father, is depicted, according to a mediaeval Spanish convention in such themes, [18] as a kind of elongated, spectral emanation. The series in the Diocesan Museum includes also the retable's pinnacle with the usual subject of the Crucifixion, and, from the sides of the predella, two further scenes of the Passion, the Flagellation and Via Dolorosa.

The style reveals an artist of no more than average merit manipulating forms like those of the followers of Raphael and Michael Angelo at Rome and setting them in the midst of rather sober architecture of the Renaissance, as compared with the pompous and elaborate edifices of Pedro Nunyes and Enrique Fernandes. We are still confronted not only with the unsolved problem of whether he studied in Italy or merely learned from indigenous Italianate masters but also with the likewise unelucidated question of whether he spent an apprenticeship in Barcelona and then received his first patronage in his probably native Roussillon or acquired his modes from the elements of the Renaissance that had drifted into this province. What scant bits of landscape Forner allows us to see, he treats as mere routine. In general he has advanced less far along the sinuous roads of mannerism than Nunyes in much of the latter's production. For the most part he is a dull composer. The usual iconography of the Flagellation, however, is varied to add St. John Evangelist to a more customary spectator of the event, St. Peter, according to a tradition that the former visited his imprisoned Lord,[19] and a certain further interest is added, as in Pedro Berruguete's version at Avila, by the consignment of Pilate and his minions to a raised tribune. Although he largely fails to realize the compositional possibilities even of the sensational episodes in St. Agnes's life, he has made of the white-clad martyr, in the scene of the brothel, a tranquilly monumental form occupying the whole centre of the space and conceived as if she were a cult-figure in the middle of an altarpiece.

---

[17] The contract is published in full by Madurell, *op. cit.*, II, 3 (1944), 27, n. 28.

[18] Vols. II, p. 242; X, p. 320; and above, p. 158.

Since the styles of the retables of Argentona and Santa Inés de Malanyanes are identical, the likelihood is that the dominating painter at Argentona was Forner, that his associates, Credensa and Rupit, were only subordinates reproducing his manner, or that Credensa was little more than the financial head of the undertaking. We have indeed had occasion to surmise [20] that Credensa was principally a kind of general *entrepreneur* in the artistic life of Catalonia and that his own performances in the realm of art did not ordinarily extend beyond the sphere of minor, decorative tasks. There are preserved fragments of only one retable that he is documented with certainty to have done and of another that on the authority of the records may be ascribed to him with a high degree of probability;[21] and perhaps the fact of their very early date in his career will not explain the absence of any tangible links with the manner encountered in the Argentona and Malanyanes altarpieces, so that during his maturity he may be guessed to have played no significant rôle in the actual execution of large pictorial commissions. As far, therefore, as the sum of our present evidence goes, the indications point to Forner as the principal pictorial performer in the Argentona altarpiece. Since Antonio Rupit does not stand forth, like Forner and Credensa, as a prominent figure in the artistic annals of the period,[22] he could have enjoyed no higher an office than that of the merest assistant.

---

[19] Vol. IX, pp. 838–840.

[20] See above, p. 164.

[21] See above, p. 165.

The central and two upper sections of the many parts into which the retable was divided were devoted to St. Julian, the church's patron. Of the numerous saints of this name, the one in question is the martyr of Antioch in the early fourth century, who was the husband of St. Basilissa and whose day is January 9. His statue stood in the middle of the structure on a carved base above the tabernacle, and at the sides were six painted episodes from his life, curiously enough not generally including the most sensational events of his exciting career and of his unusually long and sanguinary martyrdom.[23] In five of the six compartments the subjects were perfectly clear. Since, like Sts. Cecilia and Valerian, Julian and Basilissa vowed themselves to virginity even in the state of matrimony, the first scene was that in which on their wedding night they were rewarded by the appearance of two angels to crown them for their continence. Their history goes on to tell how St. Julian established a monastery and St. Basilissa a convent, in which they lived separately from each other, but at Argentona this stage in their career was embodied in a scene where a bishop or abbot, in the presence of a group of monks, clothed St. Julian in a religious habit anachronously like that of the not yet founded Benedictines. Whereas St. Basilissa died a pious but natural death, her husband was reserved for the most frightful but, as usual, ineffectual tortures of a protracted martyrdom; and yet, with singular restraint for a Spanish altarpiece, these were all omitted at Argentona[24] and there were tamely substituted the episodes of his arrest and arraignment for a refusal to commit idolatry. The fifth panel depicted him, on his way with his fellow Christians to be boiled in oil, raising a man named Anastasius from the dead in response to his judge's taunting expression of doubt about the power of God. For the subject of the sixth compartment, his baptism of a king and queen, I can find no literary source. To be sure, he christened Marcionilla, the wife of his persecutor, the imperial prefect, Marcianus, and their son Celsus, a child of seven years already converted, acted as her godparent; but the recipient of baptism in the picture was a bearded potentate.

---

[22] For the few documentary references to Rupit, see Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 51.

[23] For his story, see the Bollandists under January 9, and for a good abridgement, Paul Guérin, *Les petits Bollandistes*, I, 233.

[24] They are partially included in a retable dedicated to them in the Museum of Catalan Art, Barcelona, by a Catalan painter of the middle of the fifteenth century to whom Gudiol Ricart has given the name of the St. Basilissa Master: see below, p. 577.

The body of the retable included also, in the lower tier, six scenes from the life of Christ, the Via Dolorosa, Lamentation over His body, the Entombment, Resurrection, Ascension, and Last Judgment, as well as, on the lateral extremes of the structure, six standing figures of saints, one in each of the three tiers, at the left Raphael, Barbara, and Santiago and at the right a canonized woman who was represented as looking at the sacred monogram I H S inscribed on a medallion in the air but whom I am unable to identify, in the tier beneath her Quiteria providing the only instance that I know where she had the emblems both of the mad dog and of the human victom of hydrophobia,[25] and at the bottom an episcopal worthy who could not be recognized because he displayed no distinctive attributes. The three faces of the tabernacle exhibited the usual themes of Christ filling a chalice with the sacred blood and of the mourning Virgin and St. John,[26] and in the flanking compartments of the predella, the scenes from the Passion depicted in the main part of the retable were continued in the Agony in the Garden, the Betrayal (Fig. 78), the hearing before Caiaphas, and the Flagellation (with St. Peter's denial to the damsel enacted in the background, as often in the Spanish iconography of the time, particularly at Cordova). The doors at the sides of the altar, with the orthodox themes of Sts. Peter and Paul, were also preserved until the war, and, in conformity to the ambitious comprehensiveness of the monument, four more events of the Passion were set beside them, the Last Supper, Entry into Jerusalem, Crowning with Thorns, and Ecce Homo.

The retable made a curious effect upon the spectator as embodying

---

[25] Vol. VIII, p. 325.

[26] The Mas photograph shows this original tabernacle in place, but earlier photographs, made before the fairly recent restoration of the retable prior to its destruction in the war, reveal a later tabernacle that had been substituted, causing the original to be relegated to the sacristy. One of the earlier photographs is reproduced in the *Ilustració catalana*, I (1903), 213.

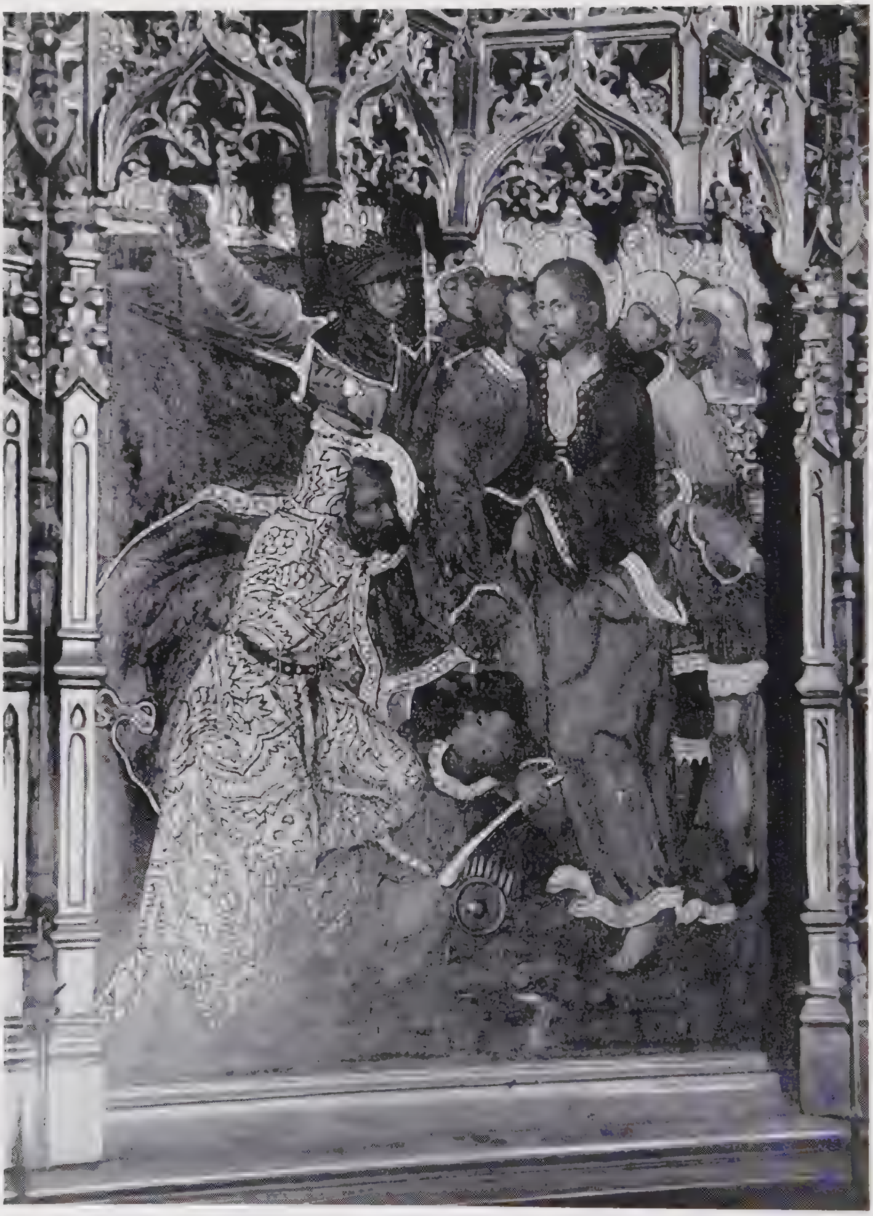

Fig. 78. JAIME FORNER. BETRAYAL, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, ARGENTONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

an incongruous combination of the style of the High Renaissance with all the golden appurtenances of the Catalan school of the end of the fifteenth century at their loudest. Among the many other instances of a dependence upon Dürer's prints in the painting of the province at this period which Angulo[27] has discovered, the Betrayal, Crowning with Thorns, Ecce Homo, Via Dolorosa, and Entombment are derived, often with little change in the fundamental compositions, from the German master's series of engravings called the Little Passion, done between 1508 and 1512; but Forner partly debased his Teutonic prototypes by jamming more figures into the spaces, so that one got the same impression as from the full and formal Catalan amassments of the Quattrocento and yet without Huguet's relieving punctuation of the crowds by strikingly individualized heads. Not only were borders of costumes, details of armor, haloes, and the like opulently accented with embossed gold, but even the Catalan gold backgrounds of raised stucco were retained and patterned in the schematized designs of the latest mediaeval productions of the region. Beneath the golden skies Forner failed to show any real degree of the appreciation of landscape that some of his predecessors in Catalonia had managed, despite similar difficulties, to weave into their achievements.

The presence of gold embossings might at first have been misleading and prevented one from descrying exactly the same fundamental style as in the panels from Santa Inés de Malanyanes, but it did not require a long scrutiny of the Argentona retable to elicit many conclusive parallelisms, thus tending to establish Jaime Forner as at least the dominant personality in the actual execution. Most telling perhaps was the constant reappearance of the same type of bearded old man. In the Malanyanes scene of the decollation, for instance, the magistrate Aspasius at the upper left does not differ from one of the Hebrews who could be seen in the background of the Argentona Entry into Jerusalem or from the saint just above the Virgin at the right in the Lamentation. It is indeed this compartment from Santa Inés de Malanyanes that provides the most numerous links with the Argentona altarpiece. The turbaned retainer of Aspasius was actually repeated in a head directly behind Christ in the Argentona Flagellation, and he gazes upward with the mawkish expression of the Apostle who looked out at us in the Entry into Jerusalem. The

---

[27] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 327–330.

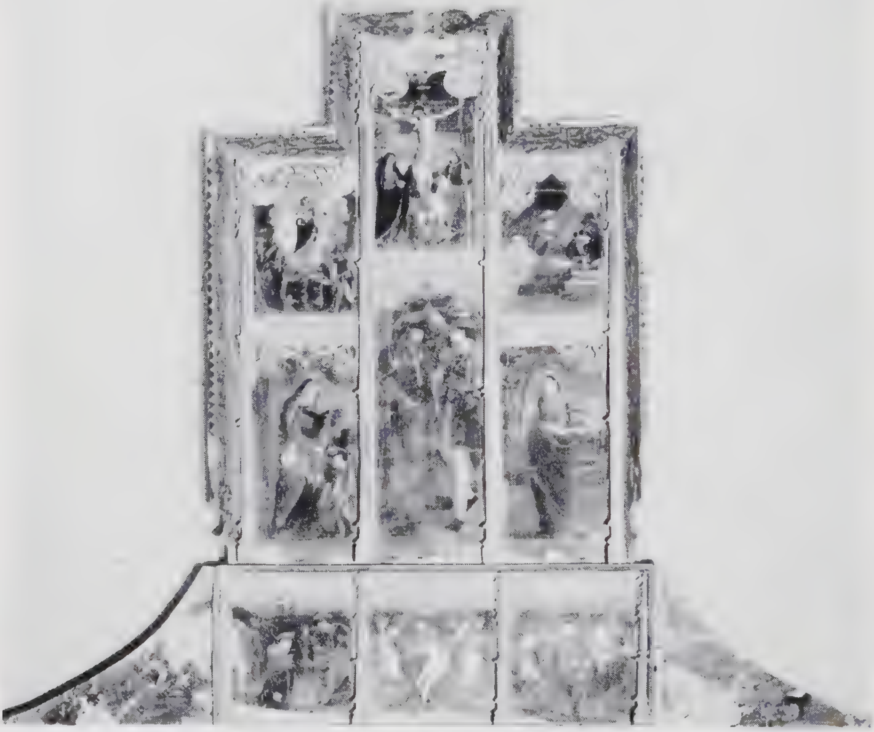

Fig. 79. JAIME FORNER. RETABLE. NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL PATROCINIO, TAMARITE DE LITERA
(*Photo. Mas*)

executioner was recalled by the left scourger of the Saviour, and the features and expression of St. Agnes herself were comparable to those of St. John in the Entombment. Even more determinative was the virtual duplication of the Beloved Disciple in the Argentona Lamentation by the same person in the Malanyanes Crucifixion. In the scene of the brothel the angel in lank proportions and in face had a counterpart in the prelate clothing St. Julian as a monk. The two Flagellations were somewhat differently treated; but the posture of Our Lord was identical in both, and the majority of the types in the version in the Diocesan Museum could be perceived in the Argentona cycle.

We are obliged to rely on internal evidence alone in assigning to Forner the retable in the church of Nuestra Señora del Patrocinio at Tamarite de Litera to which are attached two triangular fragments perhaps by Huguet.[28] Not infrequently in Spain strangely heterogeneous iconographic material is brought together, in a single retable, but nowhere more so than here (Fig. 79). The principal compartment displays the erect effigies of the two exotic saints so popular in the eastern part of the peninsula, Abdon and Sennen, the one at the left holding in his right hand a crown as a symbol of their royal lineage.[29] Another pair of canonized favorites in this region of Spain stand in the left flanking compartment, St. Julitta with her child, St. Quiricus, and they are balanced in the panel at the right by an unrecognizable virgin martyr. The Crucifixion, as usual, occupies the central pinnacle, and at this level in the retable the subjects of the two lateral compartments are the appearance of Our Lady on the pillar to Santiago, with some of his followers, and the miracle wrought by Sts. Cosmas and Damian upon the cancered leg of their devotee.[30] The reason for the introduction of the Aragonese devotional theme of the Virgin of the Pillar into the altarpiece is that Tamarite, though dividing its patronage between the schools of Catalonia and Aragon, lies technically within the territory of the latter section of the peninsula. At the middle of the predella, Christ of the Passion is curiously depicted as seated in the clouds of heaven adored by two angels, but here the two lateral panels show an iconographic interrelationship with each other absent from the rest of the retable, since they represent the Nativity and Epiphany.

---

[28] Vol. VII, p. 156. Gudiol Ricart (*Huguet*, Barcelona, 1948, p. 49) may well be right in transferring the fragments to the personality whom I call the Sant Quirse Master.

[29] Vols. IV, p. 599, n.2; VI, 130; and VII, 53.

[30] The two figures in the central compartment cannot be Sts. Cosmas and Damian (thus making the retable more homogeneous), since they exhibit neither the costumes nor the medical emblems of their profession.

We discover in the retable the phase of Forner's style in which the somewhat inferior and more mannered Canillo Master [31] approximates him, but all of its panels clearly proclaim that it is with Forner that we have to do at Tamarite. The closest parallels in his other works are found in the compartment from Malanyanes depicting St. Agnes's rejection of marriage, since she is like the unidentified virgin martyr at Tamarite, and her suitor corresponds to the St. Abdon (at the left in the central compartment). In actual facial traits it is Our Lady in the Epiphany and in her appearance on the pillar who reproduces most nearly Forner's conception of St. Agnes. The St. Julitta and the Blessed Virgin in the Tamarite Crucifixion recall the sorrowing Mother in the Malanyanes Via Dolorosa. The elongated figures of Christ in the Tamarite and Malanyanes Crucifixions are scarcely differentiated, and there is a like analogy between the representations of the Saviour in the Malanyanes Flagellation and at the centre of the Tamarite predella. The kind of pose by which Forner's partial manneristic tendencies declare themselves in the St. Joseph of the Nativity is a recurring phenomenon in his output.

With composure also we can assign to him a Crucifixion that at my last knowledge was to be seen in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in the church of the monastery of Santas Creus (Fig. 80). In a way, the picture is a conflation of the versions of the subject in the Malanyanes and Tamarite retables. The Christ is practically a replica of this figure in the former rendering, even if we regard such details as the two locks falling over the right shoulder, but the Virgin and the emotionally advancing St. John find in the latter version their counterparts. Another close analogue to the Virgin is afforded by the sorrowing Mother of the Argentona tabernacle. For the Magdalene at the foot of the cross the same model of a young woman was used as for St. Agnes rebuffing her suitor in the Malanyanes assemblage, and the hilly landscape of the Crucifixion in this assemblage serves, with little variation, for the background of Calvary in the panel of Santas Creus.

A further relic of Forner, an Epiphany (Fig. 81), is comprised

---

[31] See below, p. 364.

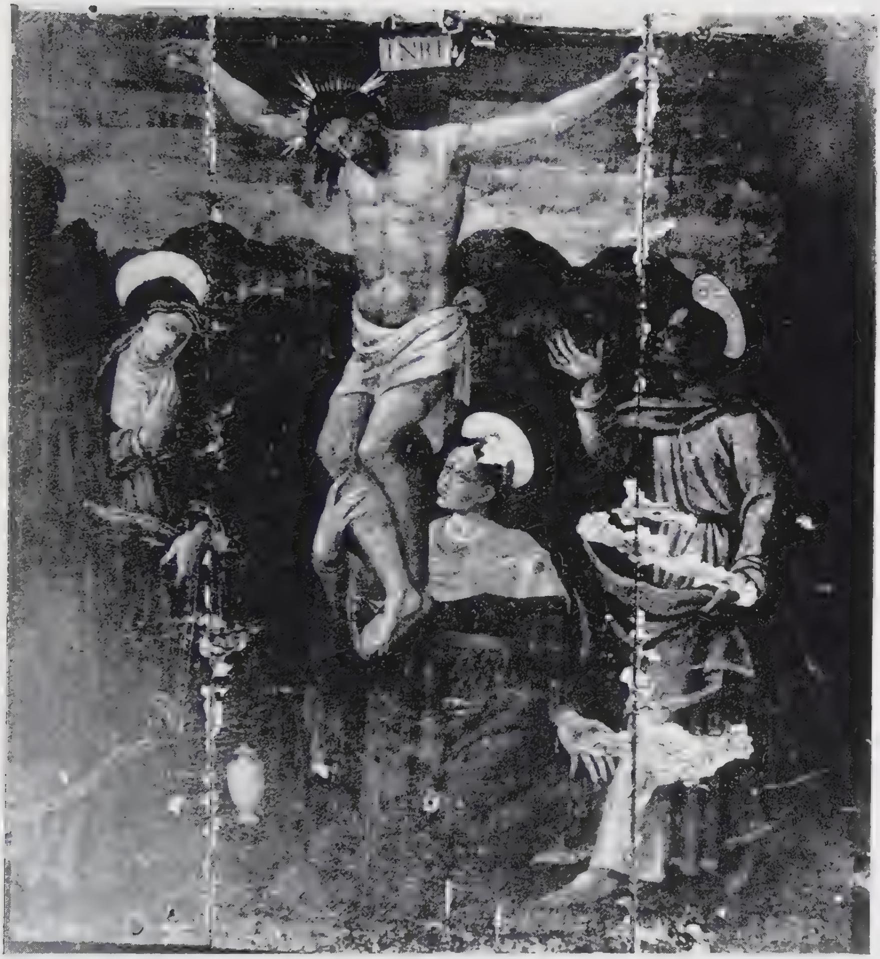

Fig. 80. JAIME FORNER. CRUCIFIXION. MONASTERY OF SANTAS CREUS
(Photo. Mas)

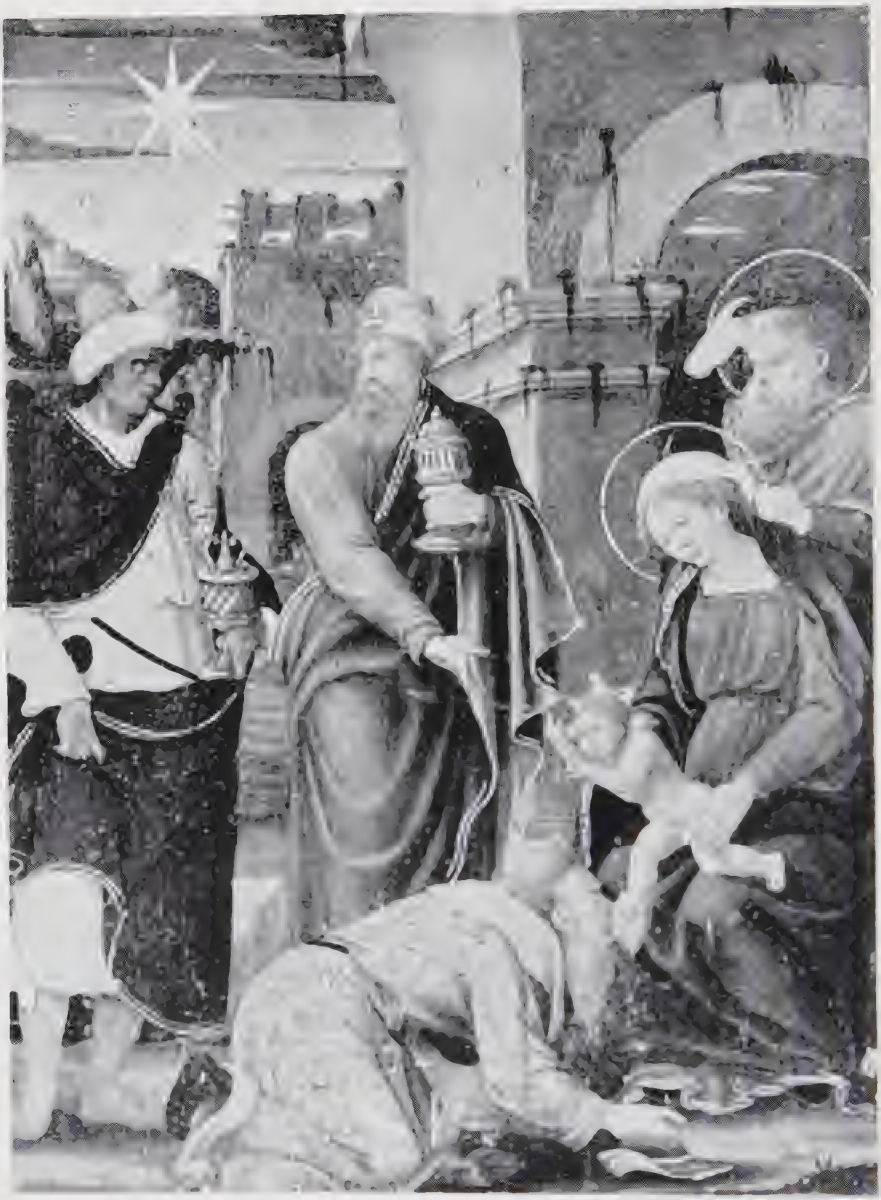

FIG. 81. JAIME FORNER. EPIPHANY. CONVENT, PEDRALBES, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

among the assortment of works of art which were accumulated in the convent of Pedralbes at Barcelona, having once decorated the edifice or strayed into it from unrecorded sources, and which are now preserved in the museum that the institution at present constitutes. No more authentication is required than the conformity of the Virgin in head and body to his favorite feminine type, as in the Malanyanes St. Agnes and her companion or the presumptive St. Ursula in the retable at Sitges, which will immediately occupy us. The composition of the same theme in this retable, as well as in the altarpiece of Tamarite de Litera, is very similar, and the kneeling Magus at Sitges is practically duplicated in the corresponding Pedralbes figure, with a kind of countenance used also for the prominent pagan potentate in the left background of the Malanyanes compartment depicting the virgin martyr's decollation. The resemblance to the Tamarite rendering extends even to the lively gesture of the Child. Rather heroically massive forms such as those of the three standing participants in the scene are not uncommon in the master's production.

I am glad that I had recognized affinities with Forner in a retable of the Seven Joys of the Virgin now in the chapel of the Hospital de S. Juan Bautista at Sitges, before its cleaning and the detailed photographs kindly given me by Don Juan Ainaud de Lasarte convinced me that this great Catalan scholar was right in actually ascribing it, as he generously told me, to the painter who is the subject of the present chapter, although I myself must interject the proviso of a much larger intrusion of the master's shop than in his other works. Formerly in the pilgrimage church of Sta. María del Vinyet in the town, the retable was transferred to the Hospital in 1912 or 1913; but Carolina Benaprés, who alone has devoted any research to the subject,[32] states that the retable was originally in the parish church and thinks that it might just possibly be connected with documents of 1544 which show, unhappily without giving the painter's name, that an altarpiece was then being made for this church in honor of the Virgin of Vinyet, i.e., of Our Lady as an object of cult in the near-lying sacred edifice. Since the parish church is dedicated to Sts. Bartholomew and Thecla and already possessed its retable by Nicolás de Credensa over the high altar doing homage to these members of the heavenly host,[33] a subordinate altar must have been the spot graced by the retable of 1544.

---

[32] In an article in the periodical of Sitges, *L'Amic de les arts*, August 31, 1927, pp. 78–80.

The original main compartment of the retable in the Hospital has been lost, and for it there has been substituted an architectural niche of the Renaissance containing a statue of the Hospital's patron, the Baptist. The Joys of the Virgin chosen for the surrounding narrative panels are in this case [34] the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, and (above the niche) the Coronation. In the predella, the Pietà is set between six compartments of saints, each seated on a bench (Fig. 82). Four of these are of common occurrence and regular iconography, Sts. Peter, Paul, Anne, with the Virgin and Child to make the subject of the *Anna selbdritt*, and the archangel Raphael, with the young Tobias. Each of the figures at the middle on either side, however, is unusual in certain respects, and, since they both carry a ship as an emblem and since the Virgin of Vinyet was invoked especially by travellers on the sea,[35] we may deduce that the retable was partly intended as a votive offering for the protection of mariners. The hallowed bishop at the left can hardly be anyone else than the episcopal St. Erasmus or Sant'Elmo of Formia in Italy, the outstanding patron of Mediterranean sailors, here not confused, as sometimes in Spain, with the Dominican San Pedro González, who was called also San Telmo and who, when represented in this dual personality, exhibits a ship as an attribute.[36] The balancing figure on the right is a virgin martyr, and, although I cannot recall, or find any mention of, a canonized maiden of this category whose emblem is ever a ship, it is not difficult to concur in the guess of Carolina Benaprés that she may be St. Ursula, who had a long nautical history.

The carving of the frames is still Gothic, and the traditional character of the compositions, retaining the predilection of the Spanish Middle Ages for symmetry, might likewise suggest at first sight a dating very early in the sixteenth century. The saints in the predella are also aligned on simulated stone seats quite in the old-fashioned way; but the forms themselves throughout the retable are soon perceived to correspond with those of the exponent of the mature Renaissance, Jaime Forner. Ainaud's authority alone is sufficient to establish

---

[33] See above, p. 165.

[34] See vol. VIII, p. 294.

[35] J. Ferrando Roig, *La Virgen del Vinyet*, Barcelona, 1941, pp. 16–18.

[36] Vol. X, p. 284.

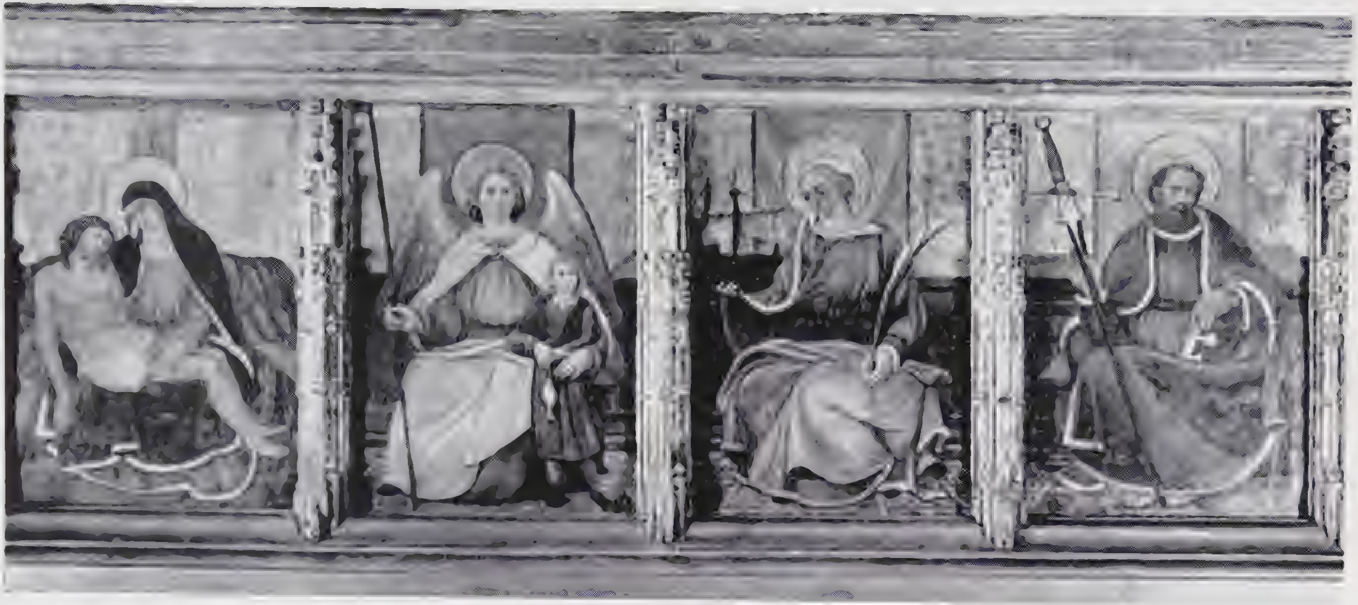

FIG. 11. JAIME FORNER. SECTION OF PREDELLA OF RETABLE. HOSPITAL DE S. JUAN BAUTISTA, SITGES
(*Courtesy of Don Juan Ainaud de Lasarte*)

the retable in Forner's canon, but for the sake of giving the reader an opportunity to confirm the Catalan critic's judgment I will enumerate a few of the sundry parallelisms to the painter's other works. Of his many similar representations of Christ of the Passion, the instance in the Entombment of the Argentona altarpiece scarcely varies from the Saviour in the Pietà of the predella, the section of the retable where, in contrast to its main body, we most descry Forner's unassisted brush. The Virgin in the *Anna selbdritt* and the putative St. Ursula are derived from the same kind of woman as the St. Agnes repulsing her suitor in the Malanyanes altarpiece, and it is perhaps only the hand of an assistant that slightly modifies the type in the Mary of the Annunciation, Nativity, and Epiphany. The St. John in the Ascension and Pentecost reiterates this very Apostle in the Flagellation of the Malanyanes retable, and a further specimen of the same sort of head is found in the Magdalene of the Crucifixion in this series of panels. There is a resemblance, especially in the draperies, between Gabriel of the Annunciation and the angel protecting St. Agnes in the brothel, and the helmeted, sleeping soldier in the foreground at the left in the Resurrection is repeated in the Argentona version.

With all this material at hand for comparison, we are now ready to prove, by demonstrating the existence of the same style in the retable at Marcevol (Fig. 83), that the Jaime Forner of Barcelona is none other than the painter of this name active in Roussillon at an earlier stage in his career. The paintings in the structure over the high altar of Marcevol that belong to the contract of 1527 are: the scenes of the Annunciation, Nativity, Ascension, and Pentecost; in the present disposition of the pieces, at a higher level the Resurrection flanked by a fragment of an originally complete representation of the Epiphany and by a figure of the canonized pope, St. Linus; [37] at the summit the sole form of the Crucified in a landscape; and a predella with the Pietà between half-lengths of Sts. Peter, Sebastian, Eulalia, and (?) Benedict. The centre of the retable is occupied by a statue of the Madonna which the contract orders from Forner himself, whom we have found to have practised also the art of sculpture. Only the predella has kept its original frames, archaistically Gothic as at Argentona, Tamarite, and Sitges, but fragments of the carved borders of the other compartments are stored behind the altar.

---

[37] See below, p. 432.

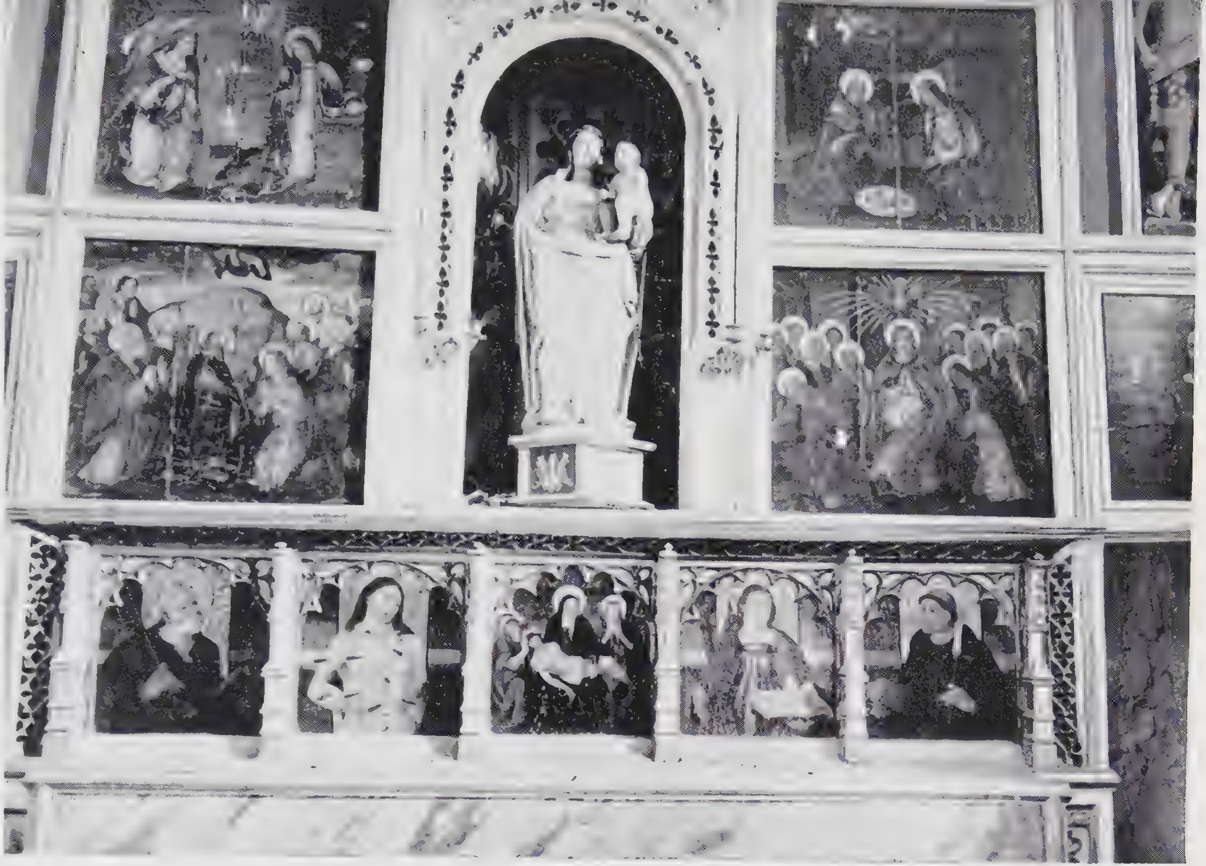

FIG. 83. JAIME FORNER. RETABLE OF THE VIRGIN. NOTRE DAME DE LAS GRADAS, MARCEVOL
(*Courtesy of Professor Marcel Durliat*)

The conjunction of a style generally like that of the Jaime Forner of Barcelona with a document assigning the Marcevol retable to a painter of the same name is almost enough in itself to show that we have to do with a single personality, but the equation is securely established by many detailed analogies. The most conclusive is found in the St. Sebastian, who in anatomy, pose, and inclination of the head more than prophesies the Christ of the Malanyanes Flagellation and only to a less extent the Saviour in the Argentona version of the theme. The actual countenance of St. Sebastian is very similar to the lineaments of St. Agnes rejecting her lover. The rather unusual placing of the Virgin in a profile posture at the centre of the composition of the Ascension, with St. John at the right beside her, appears also in the Sitges retable, which in the St. Raphael of the predella exhibits a figure with exactly the bland stare of the St. Eulalia. Nearly quite as telling are the correspondences between the Virgin of the Pietà and her figure in the Malanyanes Via Dolorosa, between her treatment in the Annunciation and the St. Basilissa angelically rewarded for chastity in the Argentona altarpiece, or between the St. John in the Pentecost and the same Apostle on the Argentona tabernacle. The reader, if he wishes, can pursue almost unlimitedly the process of discovering minor correlations, as of the St. John in the Pietà to this participant in the Malanyanes Crucifixion or in the Argentona Lamentation and as of the more aged persons, particularly of St. Peter, both at Marcevol and in the master's later achievements.

CHAPTER IX

PEDRO GASCÓ

We should naturally have reserved Juan Gascó's son, Pedro (in Catalan, Perot), for a later volume, since he is an out-ond-out Italianate mannerist, but it will make for greater lucidity if we consider him at the same time as we study his father. It is impossible, however, to follow the son's career with the ordered accuracy or to document his works with the clarity that have guided our examination of Juan Gascó, because the elder Gudiol never wrote the article on him which in his monograph devoted to the father [1] he stated that he hoped to compose. The references to Pedro in this monograph and in other writings of Gudiol reveal that he possessed extensive records of the son's life and artistic production, but death overtook him before he could give to the public more than a very exiguous amount of this material and even so only in brief allusions and summaries without quoting the actual documents. Pedro's style, however, is so easy to recognize that even the two works that Gudiol's allusions definitely authenticate enable us to attribute to him on internal evidence a considerable number of other extant paintings and thus to obtain a well-rounded conception of the little niche in Spanish art into which he fits.

In a short article on recent acquisitions of the Museum at Vich in the *Anuari de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans* of 1908 [2] Gudiol, without citing the documents, states as the limits of Pedro's recorded activity 1522 to 1546, but the earliest published mention of him occurs in his father's will of 1529.[3] Among the incidental allusions to the son in the Catalan scholar's monograph on the father, there is contained the information [4] that Pedro from 1538 to 1541 agreed to add sections to Juan's retable for the Carmelite monastery at Vich.[5] The year 1538, on January 12, was signalized also by the one document that Gudiol has summarized, in the yearly *Memoria* of the Vich Museum,[6] as es-

---

[1] P. XXIX.

[2] P. 569.

[3] See above, p. 12.

[4] P. X.

[5] See above, p. 50.

[6] *El Museu Arquelogich-Episcopal de Vich, Memoria,* 1923, pp. 9–10.

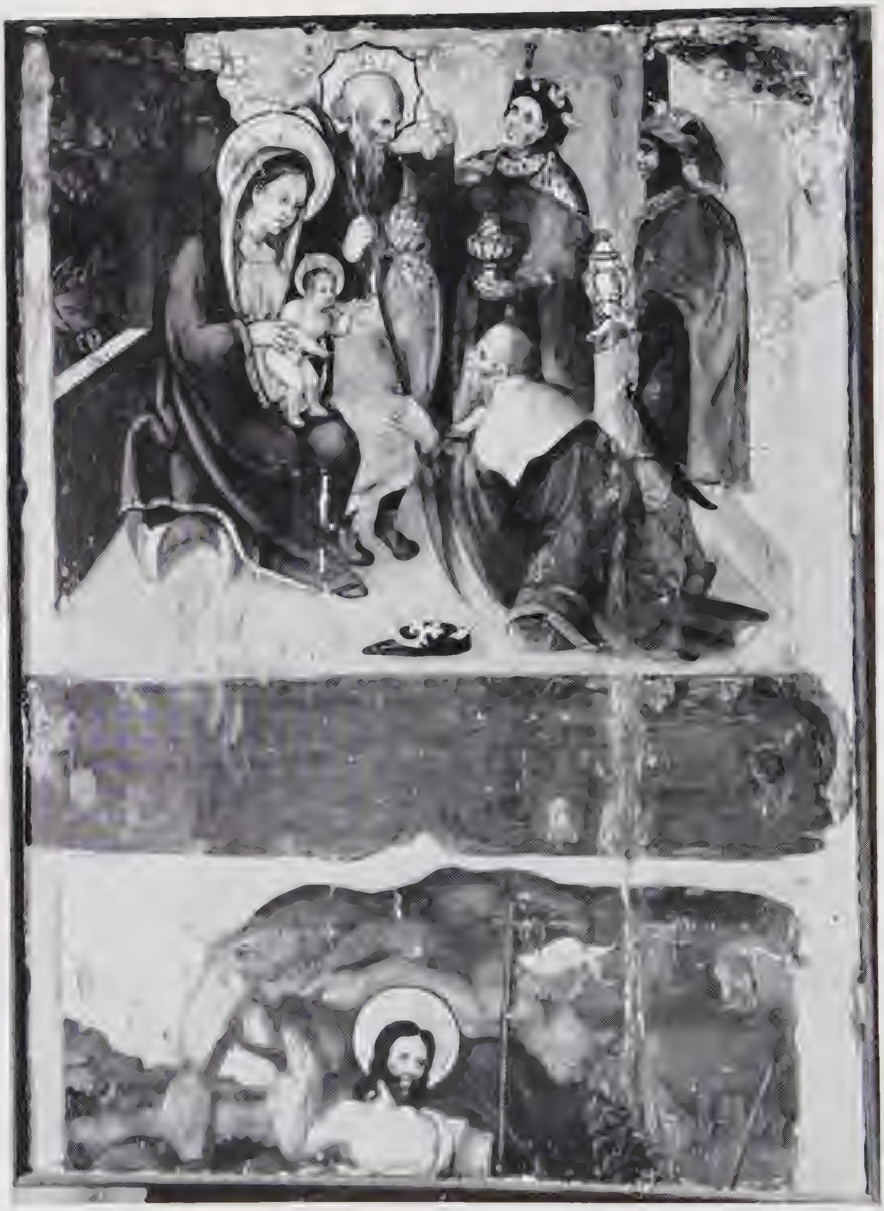

FIG. 84. PEDRO GASCO. EPIPHANY AND RESURRECTION, FRAGMENT OF RETABLE FROM TAVERTET. MUSEUM, VICH

(*Photo. Serra*)

tablishing Pedro's authorship of an extant work, a contract to do a retable of Our Lady of Sorrows for the church of Tavertet, just northeast of Vich. The extant work is a mere fragment, now in the Vich Museum, of the upper left section of the retable, preserving no more than a representation of the Epiphany and, underneath, the top of the otherwise destroyed scene of the Resurrection (Fig. 84). In the above-mentioned article in the *Anuari de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans*, Gudiol categorically lists as a creation of Pedro a Holy Family, with the young St. John, in the Vich Museum (Fig. 85); and, since I take it that he had sound authority to substantiate the attribution and since at all events its style entirely accords with that of the Tavertet fragment, I will use also the Holy Family as a foundation for rearing the edifice of the artist's personality. A later date for Pedro than any known to Gudiol is provided by the contract of the artist, together with his brothers also belonging to the profession, Francisco and Sebastián, signed on June 15, 1549, to do a lost retable of the Virgin for the church of S. Félix at Torelló.[7] It is not plain whether through document or mere inference Gudiol[8] describes Pedro as trained by Juan and continuing the paternal manner, but in any case his basic style was not derived from his parent, who, however, would naturally have instructed him in such indecisive rudiments of the craft as how to draw, to use the brush, and to prepare the pigments. Now and then a very few of Pedro's types might possibly but not necessarily be interpreted as reflecting those of his father, but in general his paintings disclose only unimportant reminiscences of Juan's achievements, wind-blown hair, for instance, or, when he retains gold backgrounds, the tooled patterns.

In the documented fragment from Tavertet Pedro emerges as handling absolutely characteristic Spanish mannerism with talents of about the same degree of no more than moderate merit that Juan had exhibited in adopting the earlier Renaissance. The aspect which mannerism here particularly assumes is an addiction to rather haggard countenances, and it may have been his provincial environment that in general saved him largely from the movement's affectation of posture and gesture. The attenuation of forms that belongs to the essence of mannerism is better illustrated in other works of his. The style gives the impression of having been acquired by Pedro else-

---

[7] Fortiá Solá, *Historia de Torelló*, Barcelona, II, 1948, pp. 37–38.

[8] Monograph on Juan Gascó, pp. XVI and XXIX.

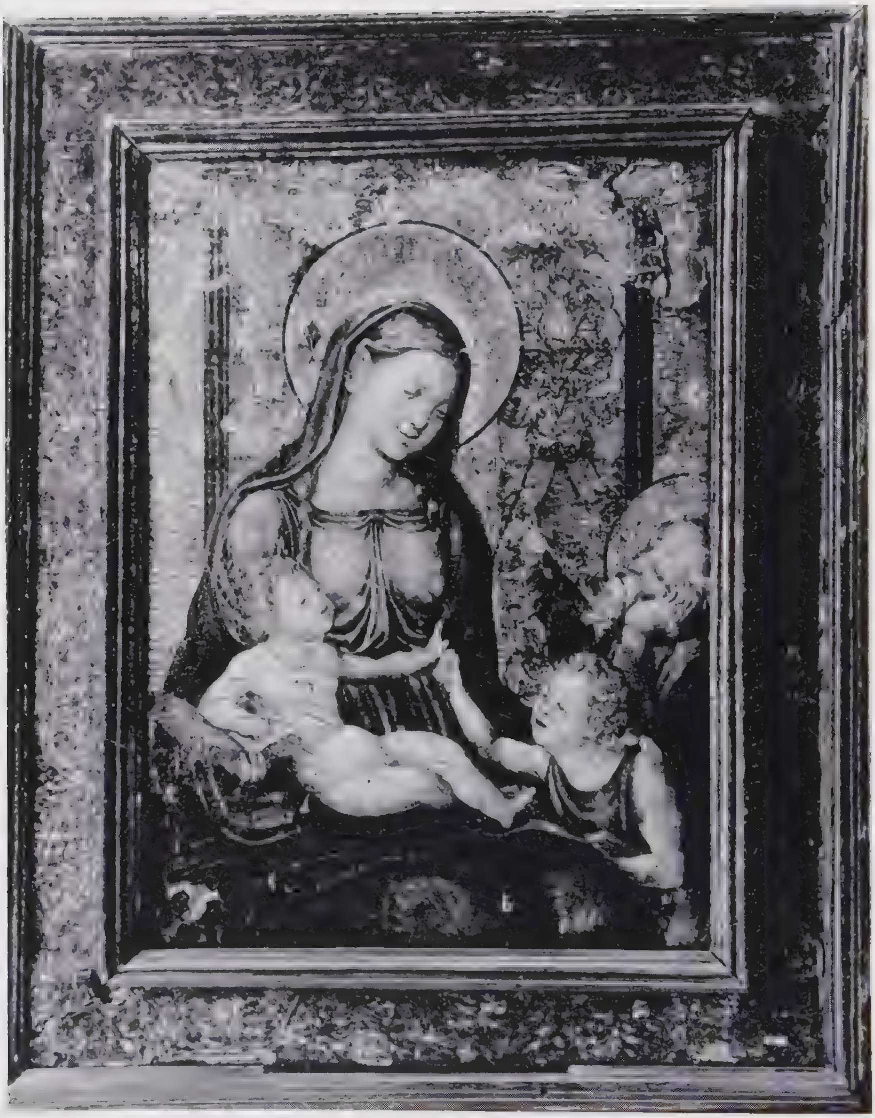

FIG. 85. PEDRO GASCÓ. HOLY FAMILY. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

where than in Catalonia, perhaps from Aragon, but it resembles more closely Castilian mannerism of the period, with the corollary that, possibly at his father's suggestion, he would have gone for his training to western Spain whence Juan had originally emigrated. Or his mode of painting may reflect an initiation into mannerism within the confines of Italy itself, whither some of his other productions, particularly in his last years, supply us with stronger evidence for taking him. It may be that we ought to understand the types of persons, particularly the old men, as descended through one or two generations from Leonardo da Vinci, but in the rest of his output there are often fused with this conceivably Leonardesque strain obvious borrowings from Raphael or at least the Raphaelesque tradition. It will subsequently appear that he may have been familiar with the attainments of such Florentine mannerists as Bugiardini, Franciabigio, and, at the end of his life, especially Pontormo. One might wring from the Tavertet fragment also slight indications of an acquaintance with the Antwerp mannerists' works, which were imported in such large quantities into Spain, but we shall not find in any of Pedro Gascó's creations absolutely unmistakable substantiation of such Flemish contacts. The golden skies in the fragment retain Juan's design of rosettes.

It is above all in the representations of the Holy Family, which were a specialty of Pedro much in demand by his patrons, that the Raphaelesque debt is tangible. The very fact that he did such separate devotional pictures, not parts of retables, is witness to his Italianism. In the series belongs the example in the Vich Museum that I am regarding Gudiol's mention as establishing in Pedro's canon, but its authorship is also sufficiently declared by the analogy of the St. Joseph to the spouse of the Virgin in the documented Epiphany from Tavertet and to the kneeling Wise Man. The composition is taken, perhaps only at second hand, from such works of Raphael as the Alba Madonna (in the National Gallery at Washington) or the Garvagh Madonna (also known as the Aldobrandini Madonna) in the National Gallery at London, but, since Pedro adapts the suggestions with a certain amount of praiseworthy freedom, he may have had in mind likewise Leonardo's drawing for the *Anna selbdritt* in the London Academy. The types of Our Lady and of the two children are also Raphaelesque in derivation, that of the Virgin aiming at more sweetness than the Italian prototypes but in the

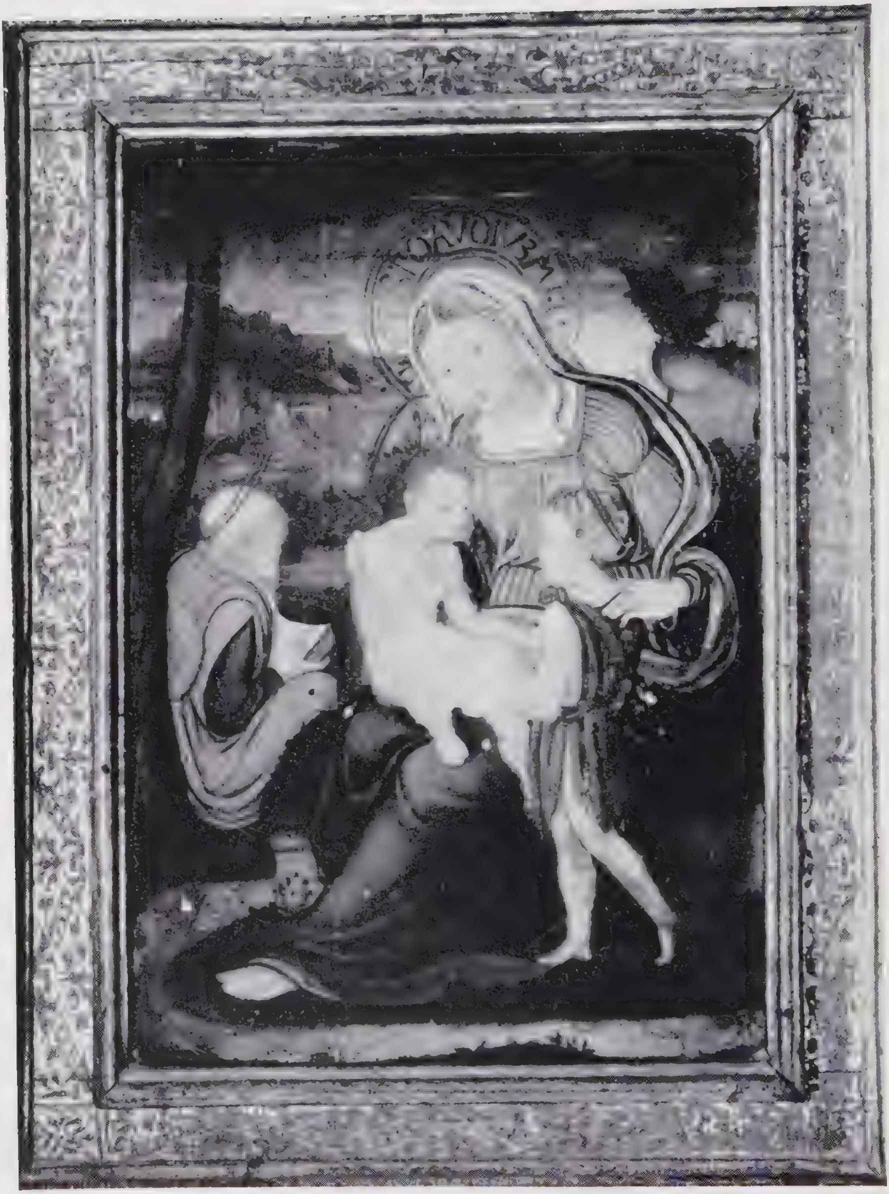

FIG. 86. PEDRO GASCÓ. HOLY FAMILY. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

process assuming the unfortunate expression of a simper. Angulo[9] has pointed out a dependence of the panel upon Dürer's renderings of the theme, the engraving, Bartsch no. 44, dated 1494–1496, and the woodcut, Bartsch no. 98, coming from the year 1526; but it is really only the St. Joseph who is derived from these sources and who in his nearer approximation to the corresponding figure in the later print forbids us to assign an earlier year than 1526 to the picture.

The Virgin is seated at something over half length against a brocaded hanging, at the sides of which are strips of a gold background still incised with the old *motif* of rosettes, but in his repetitions of the theme Pedro often depicts the actors at full length and transports them into landscapes. One of these versions is also in the Vich Museum, differentiated from the other by the adoption of a disposition of the Virgin's legs to which Raphael was addicted and by a naturalistic representation of St. Joseph as casually seated on the ground at the left with his back toward us and engaged in the perusal of a book (Fig. 86). In the third and most interesting of the examples, belonging to the collection in the Sala Capitular of the cathedral at Barcelona (Fig. 87), Pedro arrives at a manneristic style curiously but, of course, fortuitously resembling that of Luis Morales, particularly in the elongation of the forms and their modelling. The composition practically repeats that of the version in the Vich Museum authenticated by Gudiol, with St. John handing a cross to the Holy Child and with the St. Joseph an actual replica, but a comparison reveals in the Barcelona rendering a closer dependence upon what seems to be the sort of Florentine mannerism embodied, for instance, in Bugiardini or Pontormo. Furthermore, as in the second specimen in the Vich Museum, another divergence from the first version is the substitution of a landscape and a real sky for the conventional background of brocade and gold. In neither painting nor in many of his other works does Pedro exhibit much talent or charm as a landscapist, but the vista in the Barcelona panel possesses at least the interest of apparently reflecting the coast of northern Catalonia, with its plains irregularly punctuated by sheer masses of rock. Subordinate incidents, in minute scale, are introduced into the ample stretch of country, at the right St. Christopher crossing the stream with his sacred burden and at the left a number of soldiers engaged in a search, suggesting that the whole picture, despite the presence

---

[9] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 329.

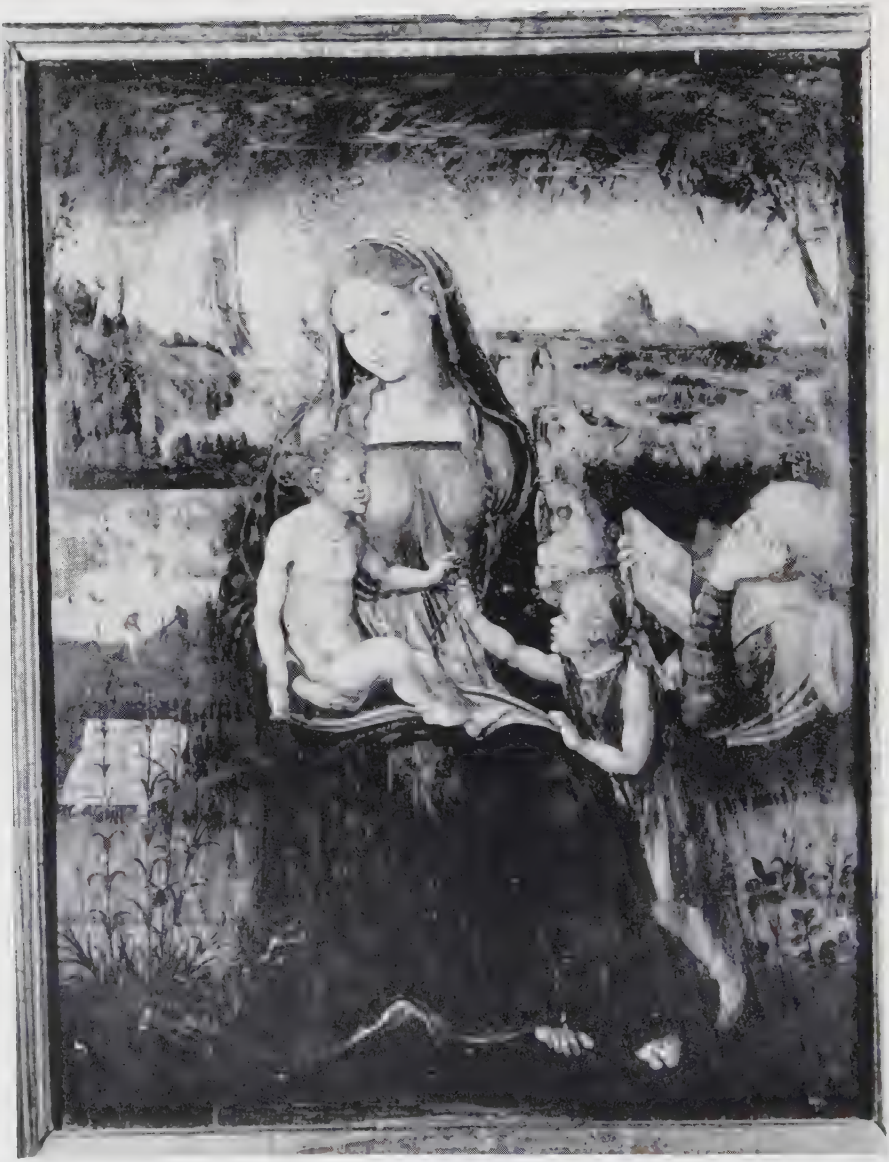

Fig. 87. PEDRO GASCÓ. HOLY FAMILY. CATHEDRAL, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

of the young Baptist, was partially conceived as the Rest in the Flight into Egypt, during which the Holy Family was vainly pursued by Herod's bailiffs. Pedro has indeed paid more attention to nature in this panel than was his wont, covering the ground at one side of the Madonna with a rosebush and at the other side with growing pinks, which half hide the book that she has been reading.

The theme of the Holy Family is somewhat modified by Pedro in still another painting in the Vich Museum, which repeats his father's composition for the Virgen de la Leche, with the Child touching a large cross held by a fluttering angel,[10] but the son adds the form of the young Baptist (Fig. 88). The Madonna is again reduced to half length, as in the piece for which Gudiol vouches, but landscape now constitutes the setting.

The *motif* of the large cross, angel, and Baptist is reiterated by Pedro in a version in the Orriols Collection at Vich (Fig. 89), but he imports from his other renderings the resting Joseph and extends the bodies once more to full length, though reverting to a gold background diapered with the shop's old pattern of predilection, the floral circles.

The Holy Family illustrated in Figure 88 is not the only work of Pedro Gascó in the Vich Museum harking back to his father's production, since the collection comprises a door of a cupboard for sacred objects that the son painted, like the specimen by Juan, with Prophets and Sibyls. In distinction, however, from the paternal prototype, the forms appear at full length, and the Sibyls predominate in number over the Prophets. The sentiments expressed by their banderoles foretell in each instance the Passion. Of the six compartments, only the pair at the topmost level are reserved for Prophets, David whose scroll quotes Psalms, XXII, 16, and Jeremiah whose inscription bears the often adduced verse of Lamentations, I, 12. The predictions on the banderoles of the four Sibyls below are again, as in Juan Gascó's door,[11] taken from Lactantius:[12] at the central level, for the Cumaean Sibyl (at the left), "Dabunt autem Deo alapas manibus (incestis)" (Fig. 90), and for the Phrygian Sibyl (at the right), "Et morte morietur tribus diebus somno suscepto"; and at the bottom, where the lower parts of the bodies have been lost by the

---

[10] See above, p. 43.

[11] See above, p. 31.

[12] *Divinae institutiones*, IV, 18 ff., and VII, 18.

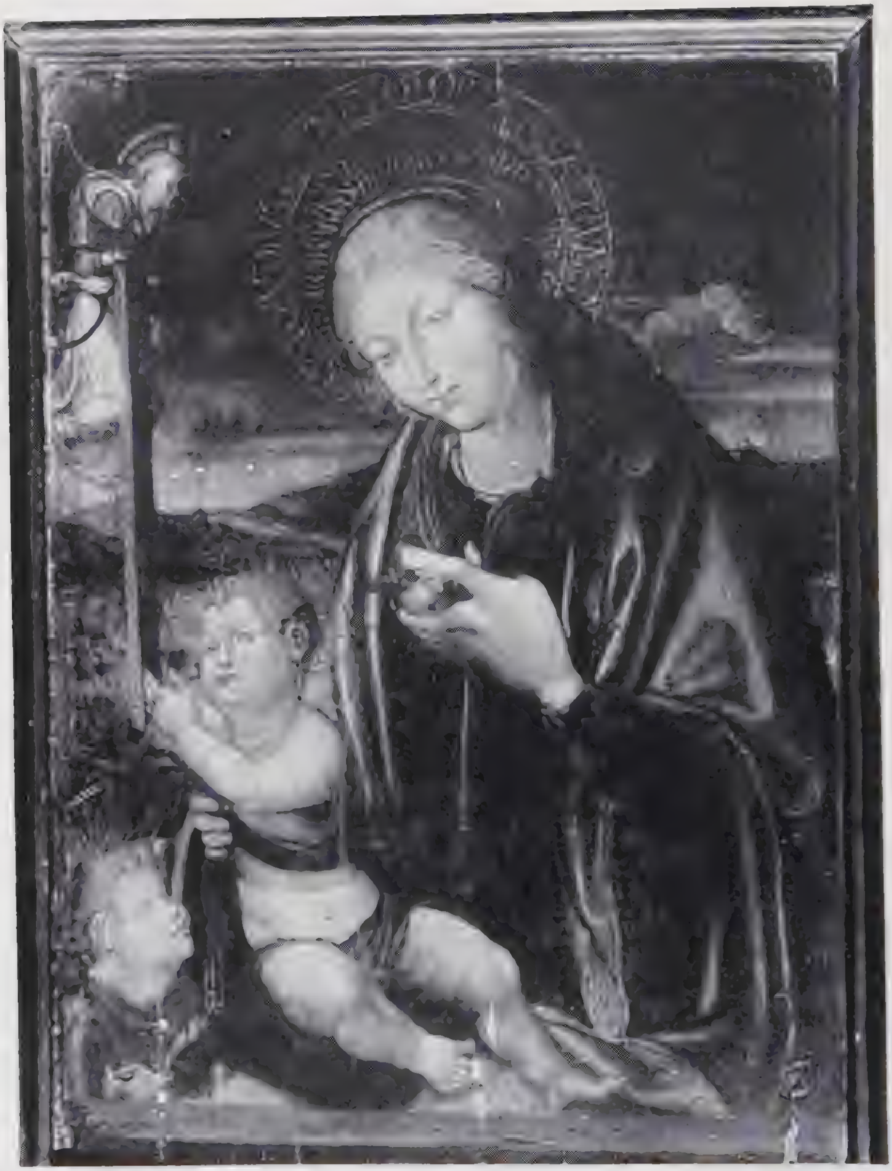

Fig. 88. PEDRO GASCÓ. MADONNA, CHILD, AND THE YOUNG ST. JOHN. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Thomas*)

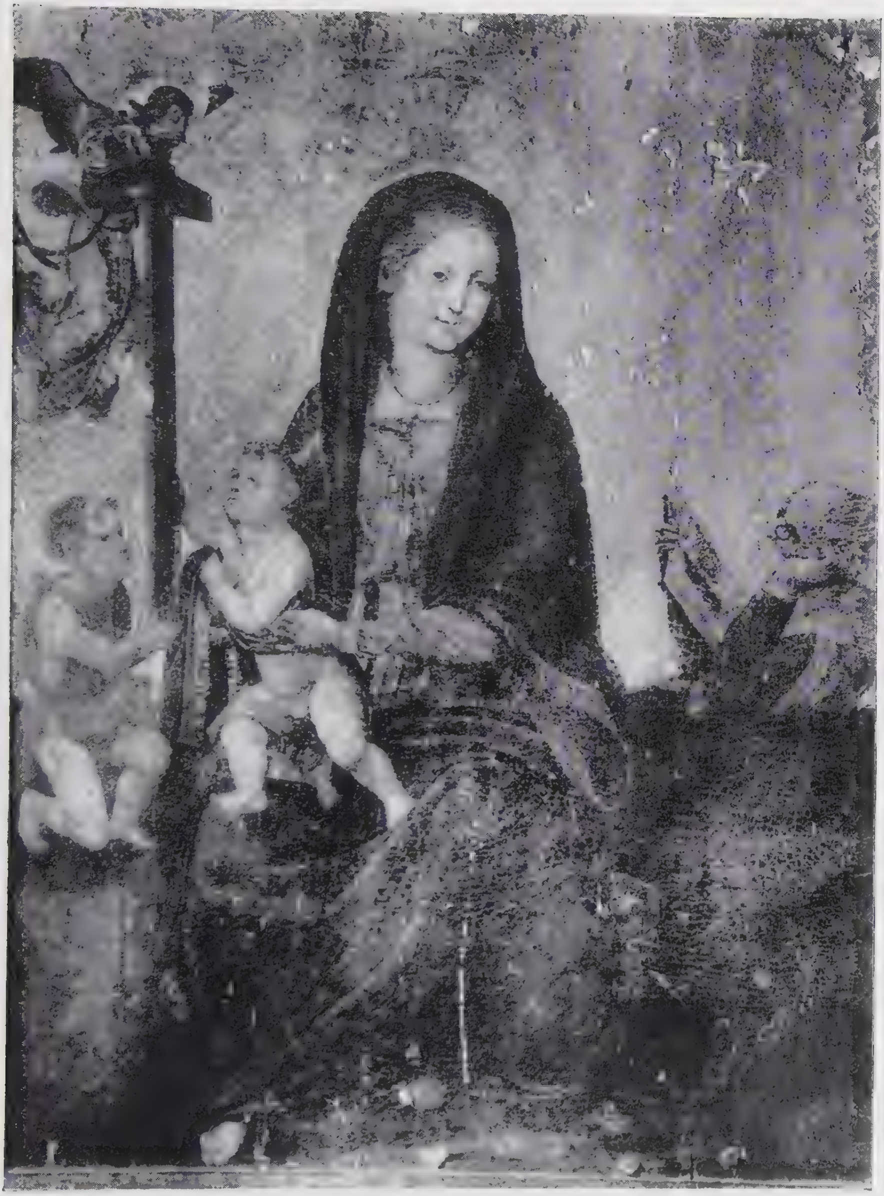

FIG. 89. PEDRO GASCÓ. HOLY FAMILY. ORRIOLS COLLECTION, VICH
(*Photo. Mas*)

panel's deterioration, for the Hellespontine Sibyl (at the left), "Ad cibum autem fel, ad sitium (*sic*, an error for *sitim*) acetum dabunt," and for the Erythraean Sibyl (at the right), "Colaphos accipiens tacebit et corona spinea coronabitur."

The analogies of David to Pedro's old men and of the Hellespontine Sibyl to his feminine types are enough to place the door among his certain productions, but even this countrified master is here stimulated by his theme to rise to some slight degree of stern monumentality that his other works do not exhibit. In most personages on the door he is even partially able to put over to us in countenances the effect of fatidic afflatus, but his limited capacity prevented him from articulating successfully the posture and gesture by which, in the Phrygian Sibyl, he sought to trasmit this impression. The Cumaean and Erythraean Prophetesses seem to witness to an acquaintance, perhaps only at second hand, with Michael Angelo's Delphic Sibyl. The gold backgrounds are tooled with a brocaded pattern.

Continuing our examination of paintings by Pedro Gascó that stand in some sort of relation to his father, we come next, in the Vich Museum, to a battered panel the only connections of which with Juan are that it has been falsely ascribed to him and that it includes a saint, Sigismund, depicted by the parent but otherwise rare in Spanish iconography — a large, central compartment of a retable in which the standing effigy of the canonized king is paired with that of St. Vincent (Fig. 91). There are no absolutely exact counterparts in Pedro's output for either figure, but the picture is so indelibly impressed with the cachet of his general style that only he could have been its author. The chiaroscuro of both faces is entirely his, and St. Vincent has much of the manneristic haggardness of the first standing Magus in the Tavertet Epiphany. His features and expression indeed are not unlike those of the Virgin in this scene, and above him is the overhanging tree that Pedro likes to introduce at the side in the foreground of his pictures. The background provides what is perhaps his pleasantest bit of landscape.

The bridal chests of the period were often decorated with paintings, as we perceive in a series of examples in the Muntadas Collection at Barcelona, and the Vich Museum contains a specimen for which the craft of Pedro Gascó was called into service. On one end the happy couple are depicted as busts, and the inside of the cover is divided into two compartments (Fig. 92) embellished with the sub-

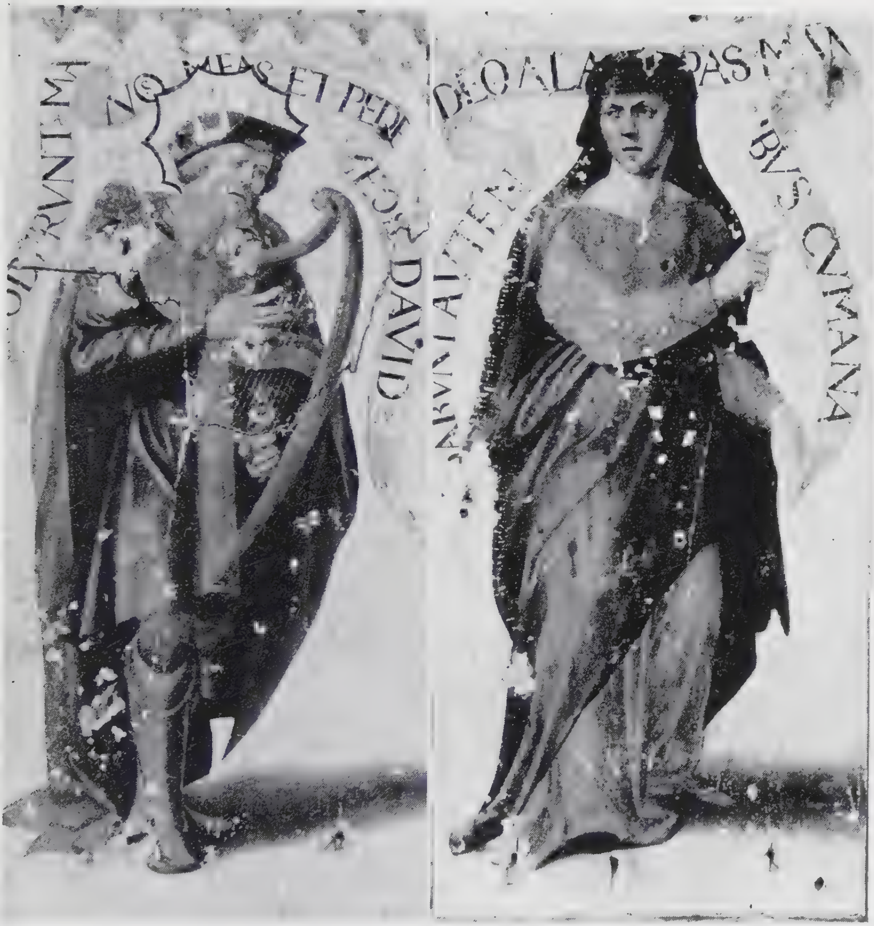
DERVNT MA
NOS MEAS ET PEDE
MEOS DAVID
DEO ALA
PAS M
BVS CVMANA
ARVNT AUTEM

Fig. 90. PEDRO GASCÓ. DAVID AND THE CUMAEAN SIBYL, COMPARTMENTS OF A DOOR. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

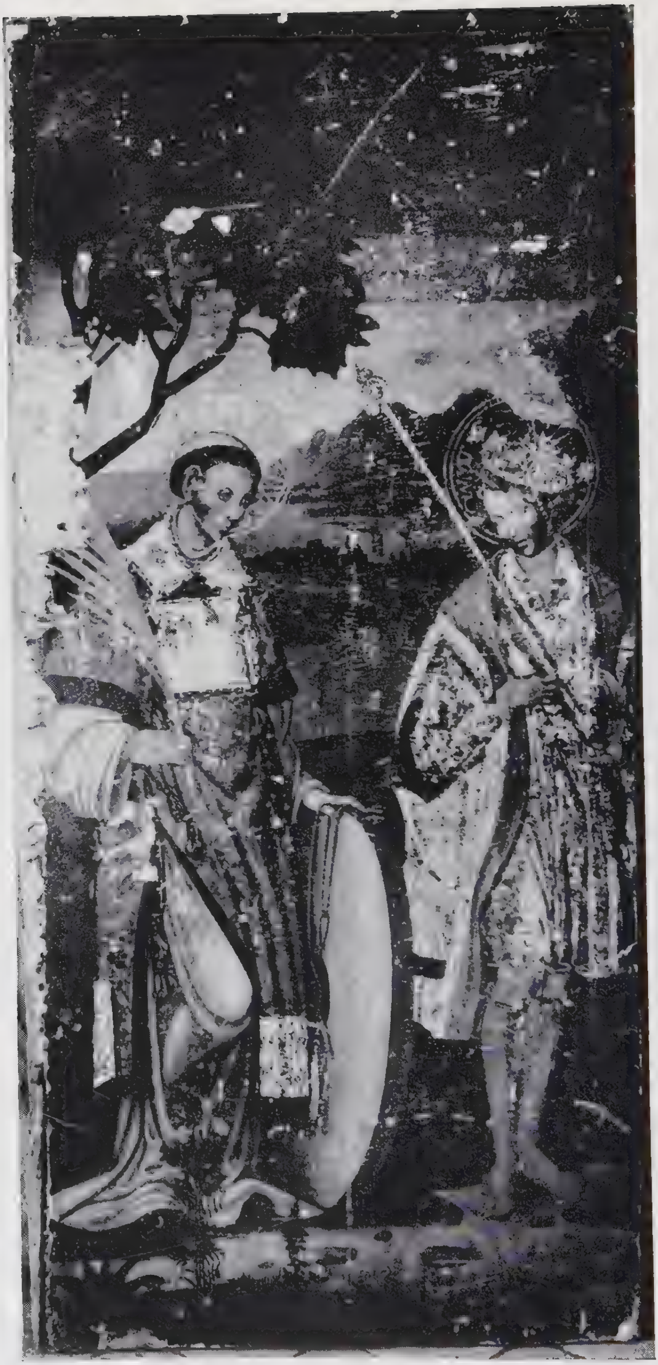

Fig. 91. PEDRO GASCÓ. STS. VINCENT AND SIGISMUND. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

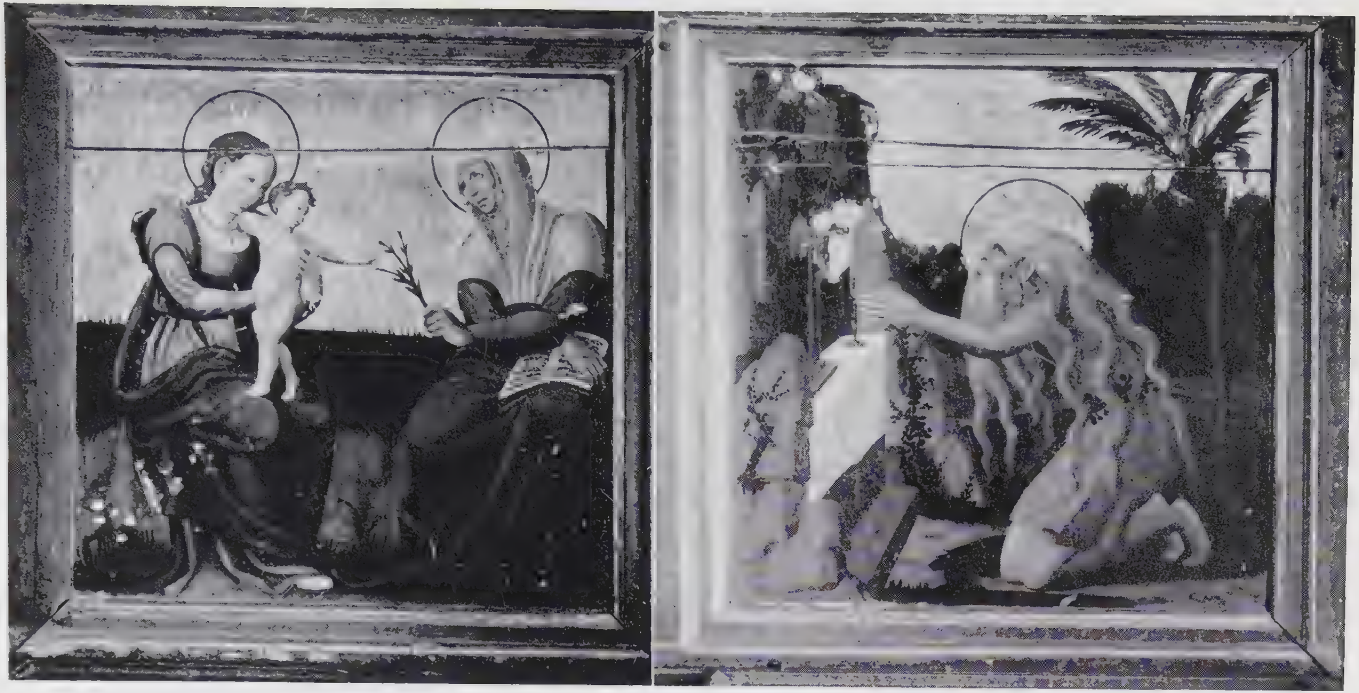

FIG. 92. PEDRO GASCÓ. *ANNA SELBDRITT* AND ST. ONUPHRIUS, DECORATIONS OF A CHEST. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Mas*)

jects of the *Anna selbdritt* and St. Onuphrius [13] kneeling at his desert shrine, perhaps signifying that the bride and groom were named after the Virgin's mother and the great anchorite. Both of these sacred themes are executed exactly in the more manneristic phase of Pedro's art incorporated in the Tavertet fragment, and their gold backgrounds are patterned with the same rosettes. On the head of the Child in the *Anna selbdritt*, Pedro apes his father's idiosyncrasy of tousled hair.

The paintings on the chest provide the closest analogues for two panels of the sorrowing Mother and St. John in the Vich Museum (Fig. 93) manifestly executed by Pedro Gascó and evidently intended to serve as the background for a sculptured Crucifix. The Virgin is well-nigh a replica of her mother as depicted on the chest, and both forms are clad in draperies the folds and modelling of which correspond to those in the *Anna selbdritt,* as well as on the Cumaean Sibyl of Pedro's door. The landscape unfolds the usual vista that he presents to us when not sticking to the archaic gold, and over St. John there spreads the telltale tree.

At San Esteban de Bas, where we have found sections of an altarpiece of St. Stephen by Juan Gascó, there exist, in the rectory, a series of panels by his son the heterogeneous subjects of which do not forestall the possibility that they may have once been parts of a single retable which Pedro executed, since even the contract for Juan's lost retable in the church of the Merced at Vich [14] betrays, among many other instances, how varied were the themes sometimes included in such assemblages.[15] First, there is an enthroned effigy of a papal saint, which may have been the principal compartment. Next comes a scene from the New Testament, the Baptism (Fig. 94), in which the angels are depicted not as adoring or holding Christ's garments but as accompanying the ceremony on musical instruments; and there follows an event from sacred legend, St. George slaying the dragon. The preserved pieces include even two episodes from the elder dispensation interrelated with each other by the angelic *motif,* the visit of the three angels to Abraham (with Sarah lurking in the doorway) and the young Tobias conducted by Raphael. Pedro's authorship is revealed by such factors as: in the Baptism, the likeness of the angel

[13] Or possibly St. Paul the Hermit.

[14] Gudiol's monograph on Juan Gascó, 38.

[15] See above, p. 221.

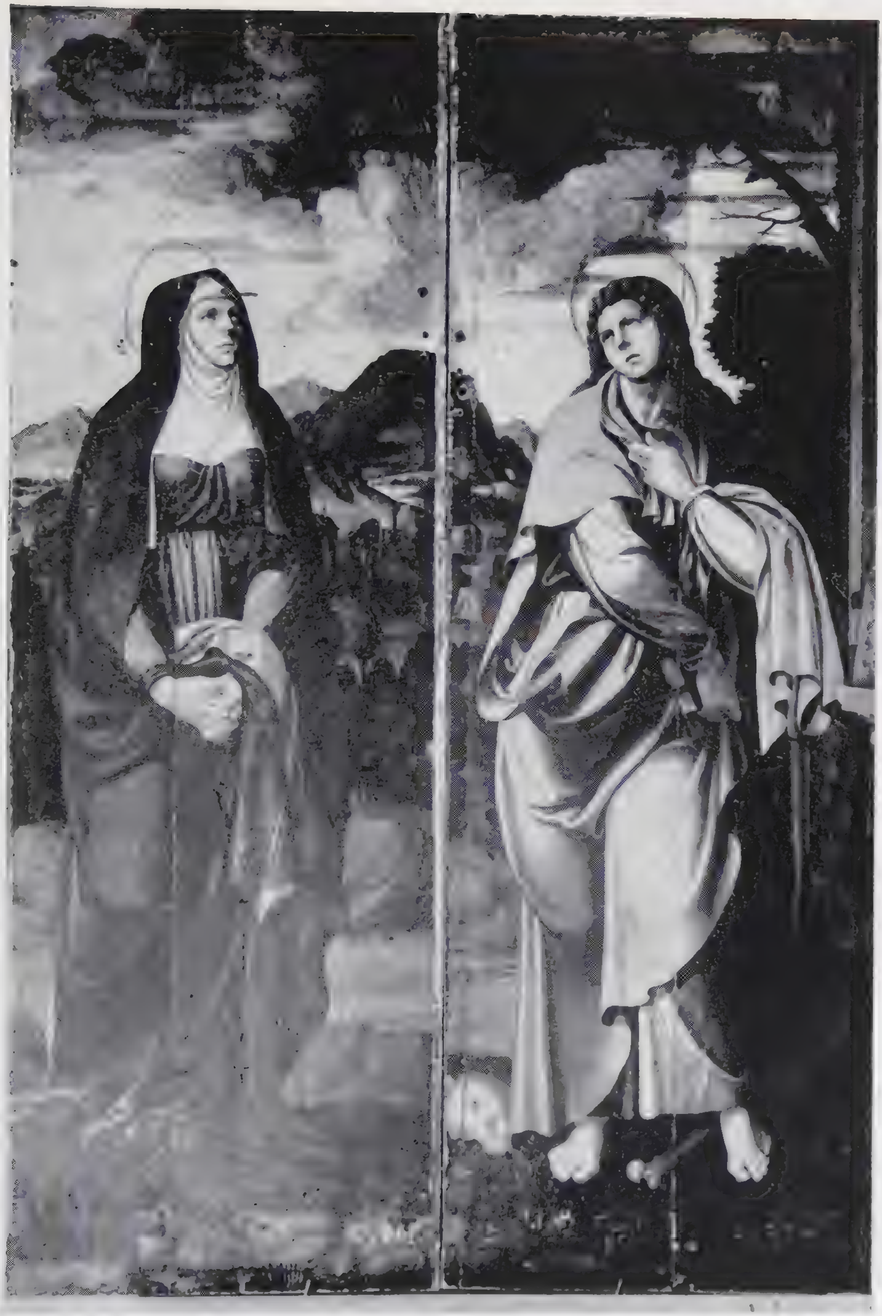

FIG. 95. PEDRO GASCÓ. VIRGIN AND ST. JOHN. MUSEUM, VICH

(*Photo. Serra*)

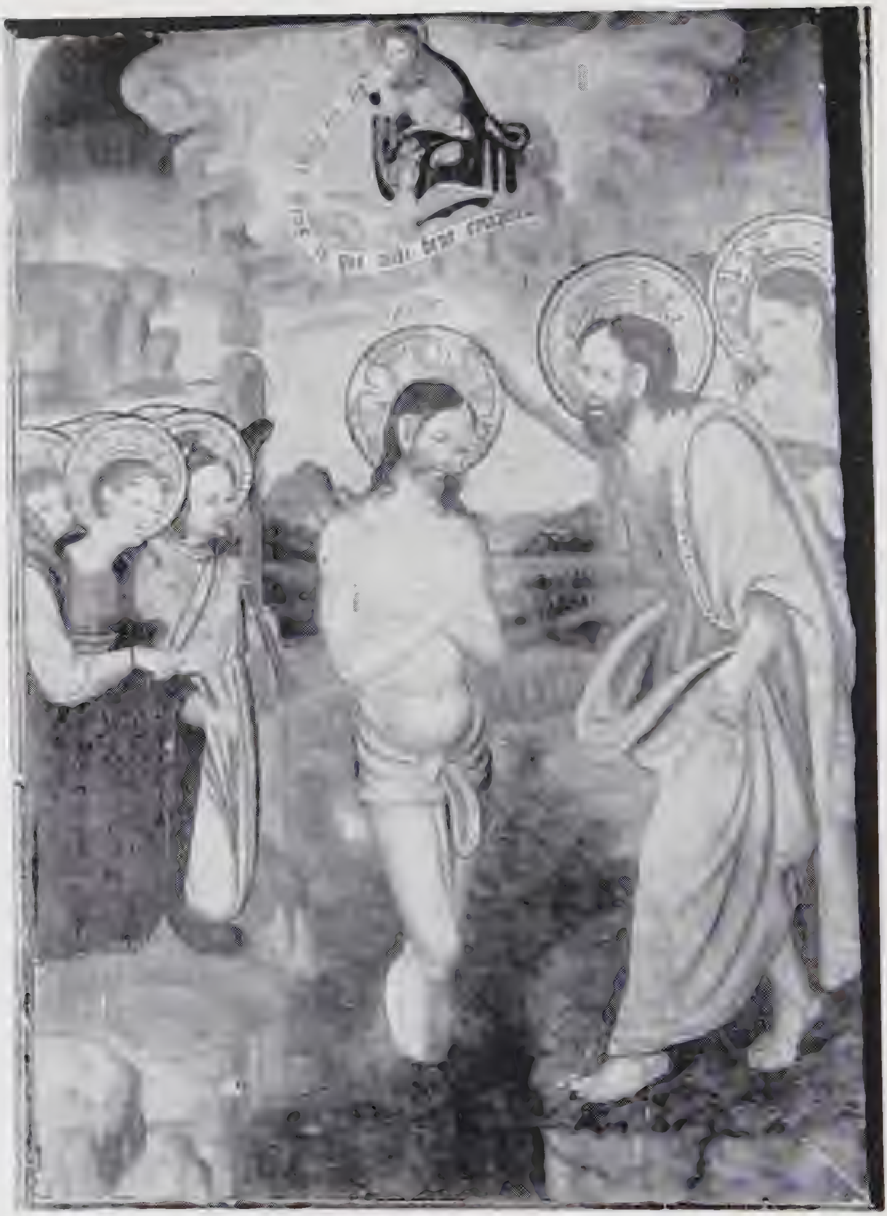

Fig 94 PEDRO GASCÓ. BAPTISM. SECTION OF RETABLE. HOUSE OF PRIEST, SAN ESTEBAN DE BAS
(*Photo. Mas*)

behind St. John to the Virgin of the Holy Family in the Vich Museum in which St. Joseph sits with his back towards us; the correspondence of the St. John to the cadaverous types of the Epiphany from Tavertet; the similarity of the Abraham to Pedro's other old men, for instance, the kneeling Magus in the Tavertet fragment; and the facial analogy of Tobias to almost any of the painter's women, especially to the Virgen de la Leche in the Museum of Vich. The Raphael and one of the angels in the Baptism possess the windblown tresses affected by both the father and son in the Gascó family. Representations of St. George worsting the dragon are likely to resemble one another in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, but Pedro's rendering conforms so very closely to the great example by Bernardo Martorell [16] that, although some hundred years separates them, we can scarcely doubt that the later artist was consciously imitating the older's composition, thus witnessing to the great stir which Martorell's masterpiece had made in Catalonia.

So far as I know, none of my predecessors has perceived what seem to me very obvious facts, i.e., that Pedro Gascó executed a retable of the Virgin in a chapel on the left side of the nave in the *parroquia* at Castellón de Ampurias and that it belongs to the ultimate stage of his development. The principal compartment has disappeared, but it probably contained either a statue or painting of Our Lady, since in the sixteenth century the chapel bore the title of the Assumption. Seven panels by Pedro remain, six lateral compartments representing the Nativity of the Virgin, her Presentation in the Temple, the Birth of Christ (Fig. 95), Epiphany, Purification, and Assumption, as well as the Crucifixion in the central pinnacle.[17] Among the multiple proofs of Pedro's authorship, it will be enough to select some of the most unescapable. In the Nativity of the Virgin, the woman lifting the curtain behind the bed nearly reproduces, in pose, robust body, and features, the Erythraean Sibyl of his door in the Vich Museum, and the midwife holding the infant in the foreground resembles the Hellespontine Sibyl. St. Joachim, in his daughter's Presentation in the Temple, is one of Pedro's characteristic old men such as the kneeling Magus in the Tavertet Epiphany, and St. Anne scarcely differs from her figure on the bridal chest in the Museum of Vich. In the

---

[16] Vols. II, pp. 393 ff., and VIII, pp. 614 and 628.

[17] J. Sutrá y Viñas (*Vida cristiana*, XVI, 1928–1929, pp. 242–243) is surely wrong in thinking that the Crucifixion is not by the same hand as the other sections.

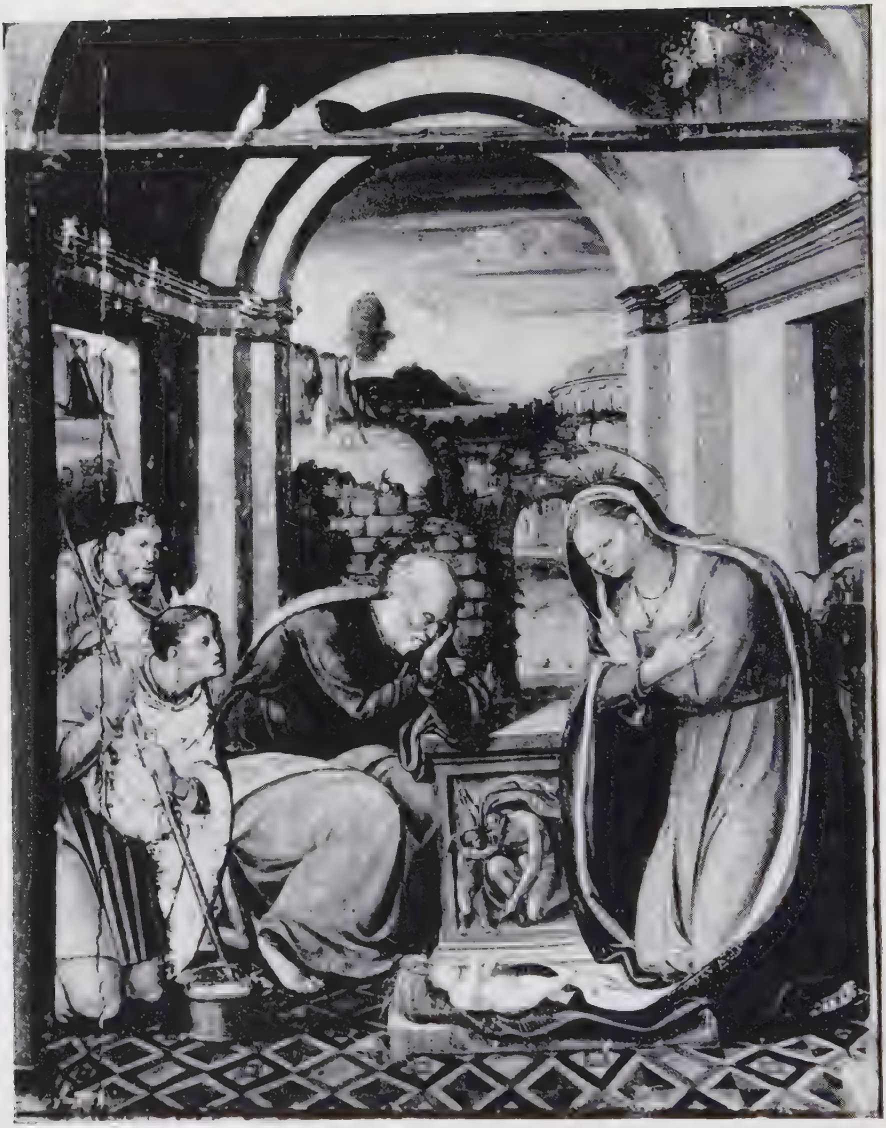

Fig. 95. PEDRO GASCÓ. NATIVITY, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, CASTELLÓN DE AMPURIAS
(*Photo. Mas*)

Birth of Christ the Virgin is precisely the same person as in the Holy Family that Gudiol authenticates.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the style is slightly diverse from the manner displayed in the majority of Pedro's other works and that the level of attainment is somewhat higher. We are thus confronted with a phenomenon corresponding to the change and amelioration that eventually happened in the production of his father, and the nature of the craft in the retable of Castellón de Ampurias justifies the deduction that similarly the alteration occurred towards the end of Pedro's life. The elongation of the figures, their draperies, and sometimes their postures suggest that one of the causes of the alteration was a more intimate contact with the Florentine mannerists, especially Pontormo, than we have yet perceived in his works, and it is hard to elucidate the increased Italianism except on the theory of a visit to Italy at this time in his life, if he had not indeed enjoyed an earlier sojourn in the sister peninsula the results of which were now coming more to the surface. The anomaly of making the Epiphany into a scene at night may derive from the Antwerp mannerists' fondness for nocturnal effects; but there is little else in the retable to point to such an orientation, and the types are Hispano-Italian rather than based upon Flemish adaptations of Italianism.

The new and livelier developments in Pedro's style may have been also and principally due to the fact that he had the aesthetic perception to imitate, as Angulo has observed,[18] the fine compositions of Dürer's woodcuts of the Presentation of the Virgin and the Purification in the German's series of the Life of Mary, more closely in the latter than in the former subject. Partly likewise because of the dependence upon Dürer there now emerges a much more pronounced concern with settings of architecture of the Renaissance, but it is from some other source than Dürer or perhaps by his own invention that he introduces into the scene of the Birth of Christ the detail of St. Joseph leaning wearily upon an ancient marble decorated with a mythological relief. Amidst a number of indications of a greater alertness of mind than Pedro generally bothered to assert, he perhaps learned from the German's prints to pique our interest, as also at times in the St. Josephs in his representations of the Holy Family, by turning the backs of some of his actors towards us, not only in the two com-

---

[18] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 328. Angulo does not attribute the retable to Pedro Gascó.

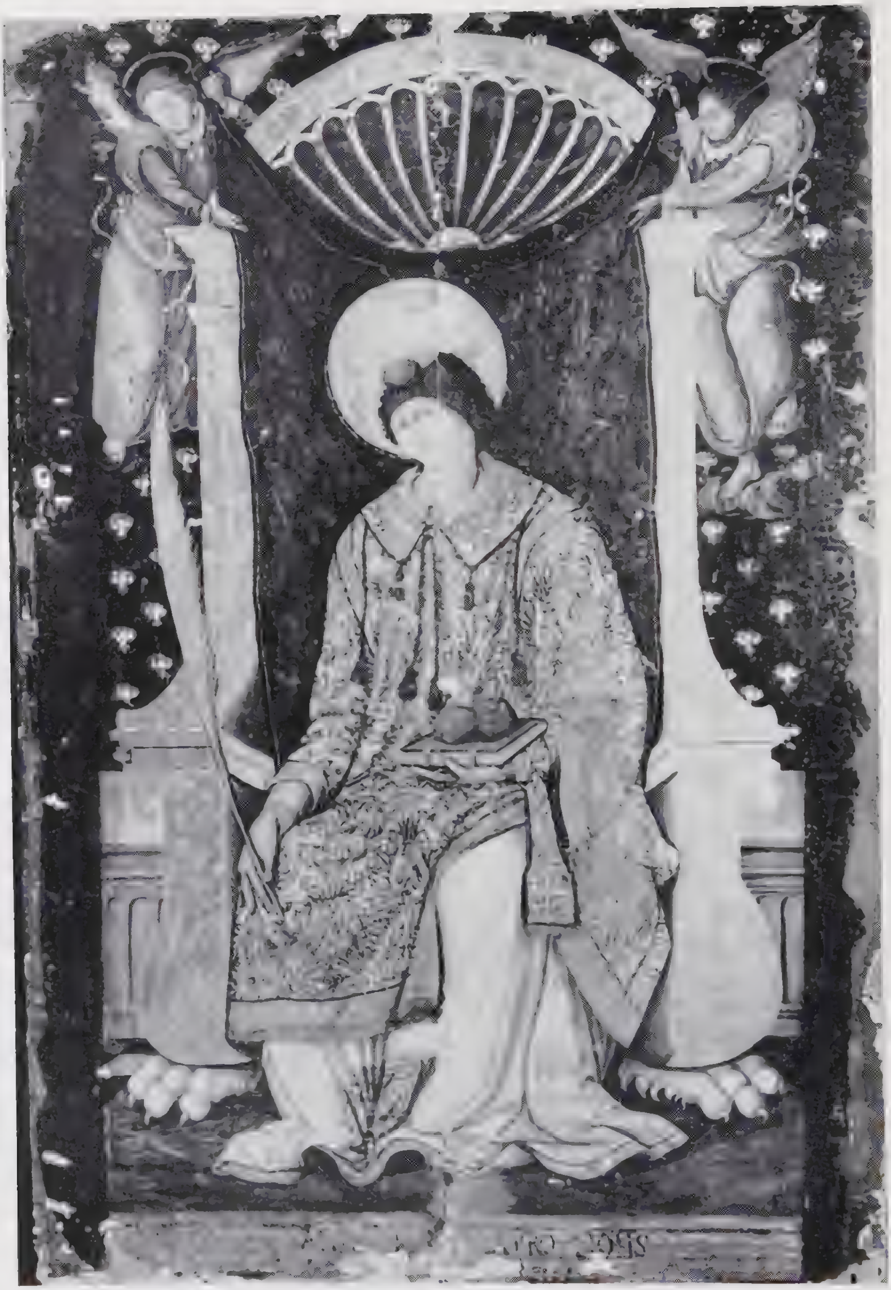

FIG. 96. PEDRO GASCÓ. ST. STEPHEN, CENTRE OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(Photo. Mas)

positions that he takes from Dürer but also in the Nativity of the Virgin and the Assumption.

In accordance with the general greater effort that he appears to have exerted at Castellón de Ampurias, even the landscapes of the Birth of Christ and of the Assumption transcend in some degree the dull average with which he ordinarily contented himself in this phase of his art. He owed few or none of the significant essentials of his style to his father; but we have constantly found him remembering subordinate details of Juan's achievements, and in the Crucifixion at Castellón de Ampurias Pedro, now at the end of his own life, once more honors the paternal memory by depicting the Magdalene not only as clasping the cross in the posture and gesture often employed in his parent's versions of the theme but even as very much the same type of woman.

It is especially the similiarities to the paintings at Castellón de Ampurias that establish in the canon of Pedro Gascó the remains of a retable of St. Stephen that from the church at San Juan las Fonts, just north of Olot, have been gathered into the Diocesan Museum at Gerona. The pieces comprise the central compartment of the Protomartyr enthroned under a canopy held by two fluttering angels (Fig. 96), the surmounting Crucifixion, and panels of Sts. Paul and Barbara seated in landscapes.[19] Although the Crucifixion varies somewhat in composition from the rendering at Castellón de Ampurias, the suffering Christ is practically identical; the St. John, Magdalene, and redeemed thief belong to one of Pedro's favorite types of human beings, embodied, for example, in the midwife leaning over St. Anne and in her companion holding the newborn child in the Castellón Nativity of the Virgin; and the holy woman standing conspicuously at the right of the cross is duplicated by the attendant presenting the cage of doves in the Castellón Purification. The enthroned St. Stephen also more or less falls into the same class of types as the St. John, Magdalene, and redeemed thief, but the conformity to Pedro Gascó's standards by no means ends with the analogies to the Castellón retable. The angels supporting the textile above St. Stephen, for instance, resemble closely the Virgen de la Leche in the Vich Museum, and the above-mentioned holy woman at the right in the Cruci-

---

[19] The Gerona Museum contains two panels of the disputation and lapidation of St. Stephen which, although they derive from the same church, were painted by a mere daubing peasant at the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century.

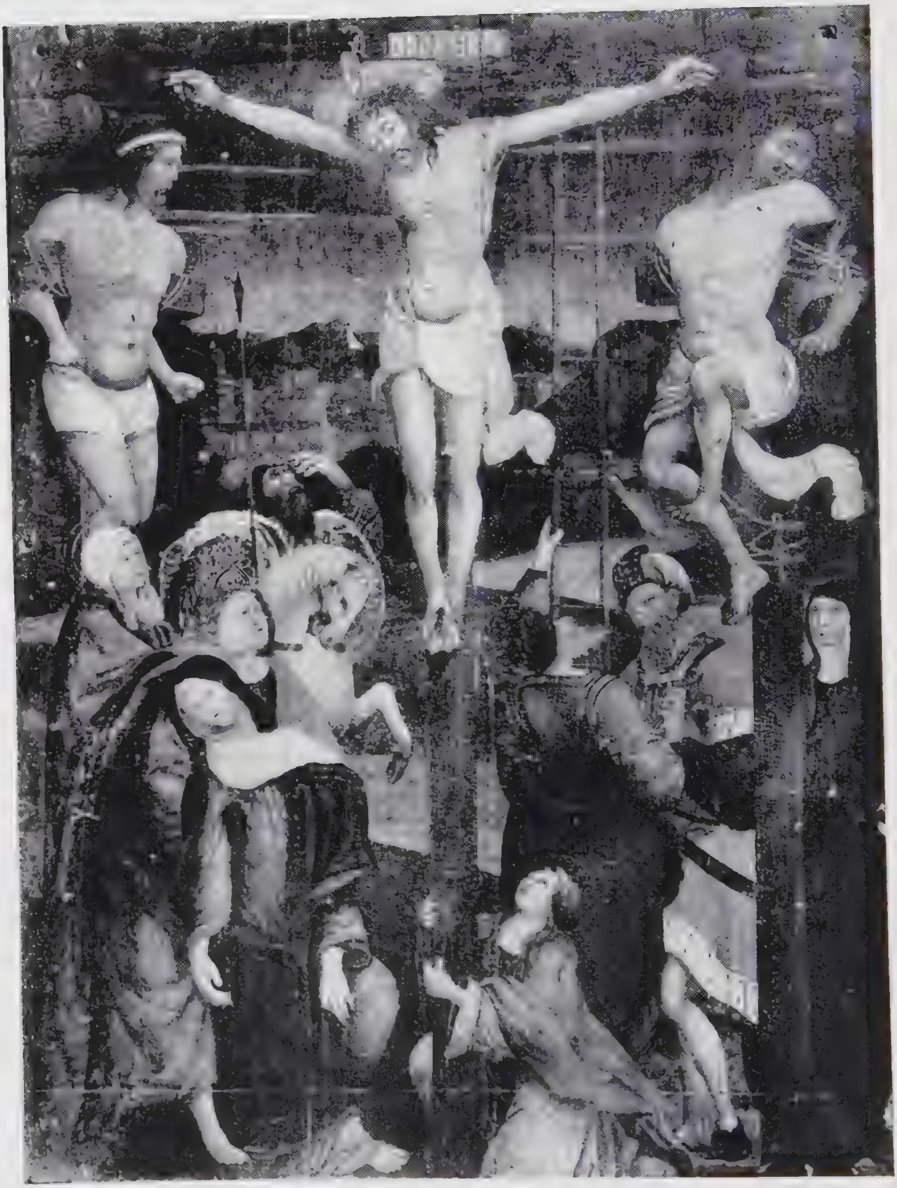

Fig. 97. PEDRO GASCÓ. CRUCIFIXION. PRIVATE COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

fixion incorporates the master's frequent addiction to haggard countenances, signalized particularly in the Tavertet Epiphany. A curiosity in the Crucifixion is a portrait of a youth as the decoration of the shield of one of the soldiers, scarcely a likeness of Pedro Gascó himself, since the retable at San Juan las Fonts must have been one of his latest works, but possibly preserving for us the features of the donor or of a member of the donor's family.

The parallelisms to the renderings of the Crucifixion in the retables of Castellón de Ampurias and of San Juan las Fonts carry a version of the theme belonging to a private collection at Barcelona (Fig. 97) into the number of Pedro Gascó's authentic works and into the same late and very mannered phase of his career. Moreover, it is said to come from the great but now ruined monastery of San Pedro de Roda, close to which Castellón de Ampurias lies. The Magdalene and the group of the Virgin and St. John are practically repeated in the panel from San Juan las Fonts, and the holy woman above the Virgin has a counterpart in the Crucifixion at Castellón de Ampurias. Even the other compartments at Castellón provide many analogous types. For instance, the St. John in the Crucifixion that now concerns us has the sort of face, as of a full moon, framed in curly locks, that characterizes both this Apostle in the Assumption and the youth beside the priest in the Virgin's Presentation. The two thieves are treated rather differently by Pedro Gascó in all three versions of the Crucifixion, and in the example in the private collection he has attempted to transmit to us the despairing agony of the unregenerate malefactor by exaggerated and mannered contortions to which his craft was not equal. With one of the flashes of technical experimentation by which, as we have seen, he occasionally illumines what must be acknowledged his rather uninspired modes of procedure, he brings the cross of this thief into the very foreground of the picture, so that the figures behind it are partly hidden, and, using it as a starting point, he arranges the other two crosses in an oblique line of recession.

A number of the works that we have studied demonstrate the popularity of Pedro Gascó in the extreme north of the part of Catalonia that still remains within the Spanish borders, and it should therefore not surprise us to find a panel that, if the vaguely reported provenience is correct, was done for some destination at Prades in the slice of Catalonia belonging to France, an Epiphany now in a private collection at Perpignan (Fig. 98). His rights to the picture are

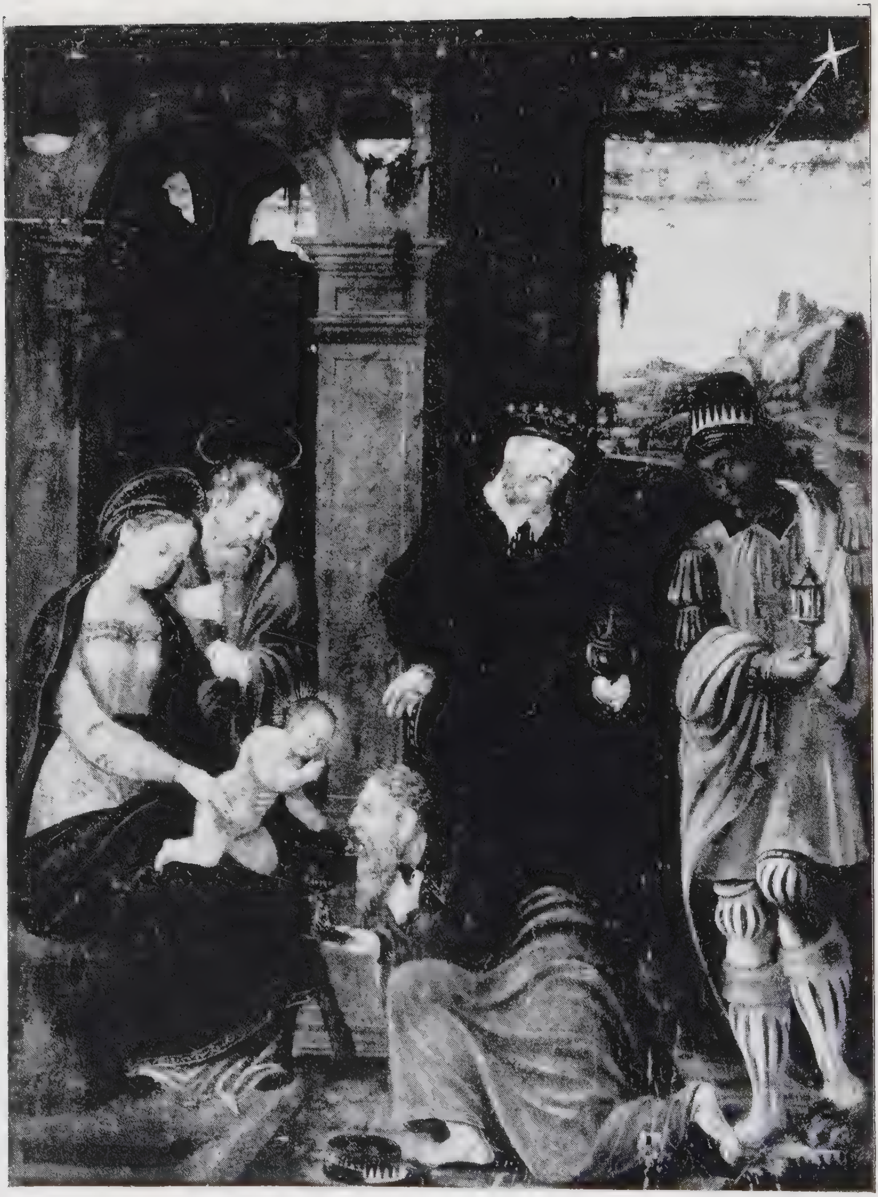

FIG. 98. PEDRO GASCÓ. EPIPHANY. PRIVATE COLLECTION, PERPIGNAN

(*Courtesy of Professor Marcel Durliat*) abundantly apparent. Among his many representations of the Madonna and Child that are arrestingly similar to their figures in the Perpignan Adoration of the Magi, the most compelling proof is afforded by the example in the Holy Family in the Vich Museum long ago ascribed to Pedro by Gudiol. The fervently devout, kneeling Magus is scarcely differentiated from the Abraham at San Esteban de Bas, and the raptly expressive, standing, Caucasian King is closely paralleled by the David on the door in the Museum at Vich. For the landscape, the reader may be referred especially to the vista behind the Holy Family in the cathedral of Barcelona. One of his most carefully executed achievements, the painting is calculated to elevate somewhat our estimate of Pedro Gascó's talents when he wished to exert himself.

It is hard, if not impossible, to refuse to him a fragment of an altarpiece, representing Sts. Roch and Christopher, that has entered the Barcelona Museum from the Moxó Collection in this city (Fig. 99). Both figures belong to precisely the class of human beings utilized for the Christ and St. John of the Baptism at San Esteban de Bas, and St. Roch's angel recalls the member of the celestial chorus in this panel who plays the viol. The profile of St. Roch himself is like that of the redeemed thief in the Crucifixion which we have studied in a private collection at Barcelona. The trade-marks of the Gascó shop, the flying forelocks, are visible on the angel as well as on the Child carried by St. Christopher.

Pedro or one of his immediate followers must have executed a panel of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Carreras Collection, Barcelona (Fig. 100). The composition for the theme at Castellón de Ampurias is different, but a minor detail is at once to be noted, the architecture of the Temple which exhibits a partial similarity to the section of it seen in the right background of the Castellón version. From the edifice at the left there hang bits of overgrowing foliage exactly as on the ruin in the Epiphany at Perpignan. The St. Anne in the Castellón Presentation is somewhat contaminated with the sickly piety of the Virgin's mother and the woman above her in the panel that now concerns us; but there are many closer approximations in his other works to this almost simpering religious expression, one of Pedro Gascó's defects, for instance in the Madonnas in his series of renderings of the Holy Family. With this expression he often combines a mawkish casting of the eyes upward, as in

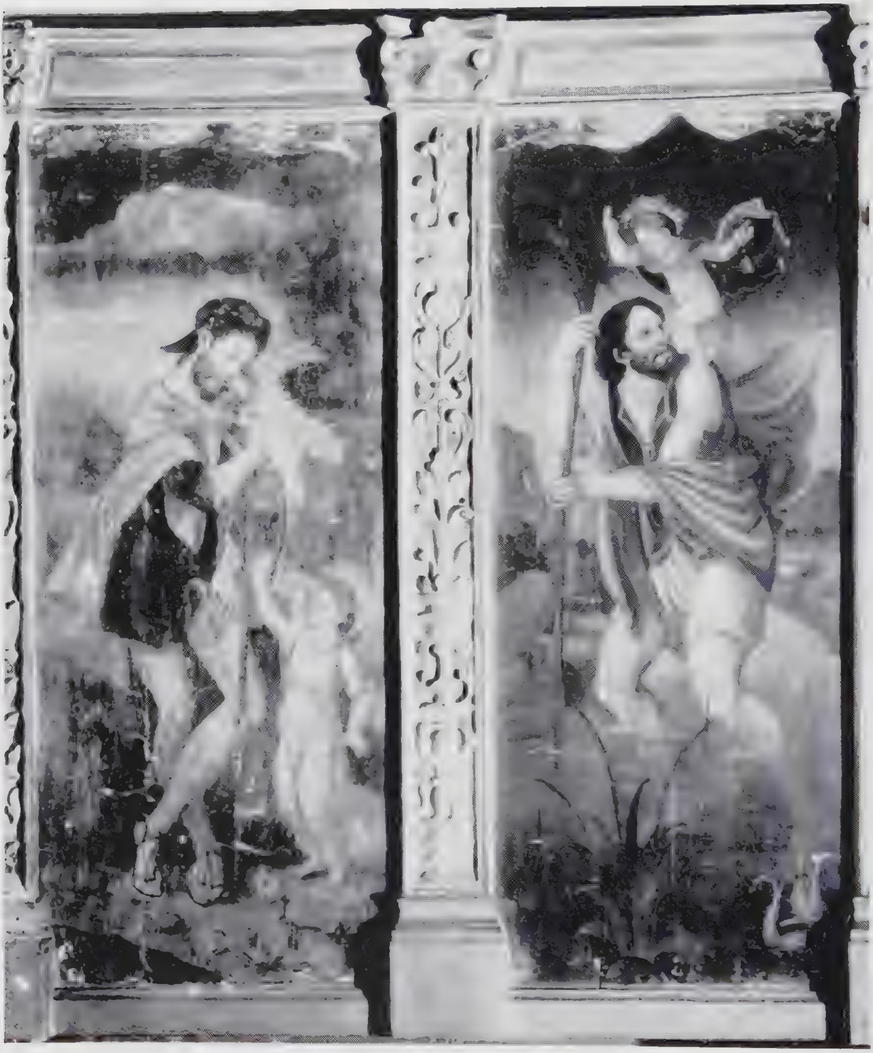

Fig. 99. PEDRO GASCÓ (?). STS. ROCH AND CHRISTOPHER. MUSEUM OF CATALAN ART, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

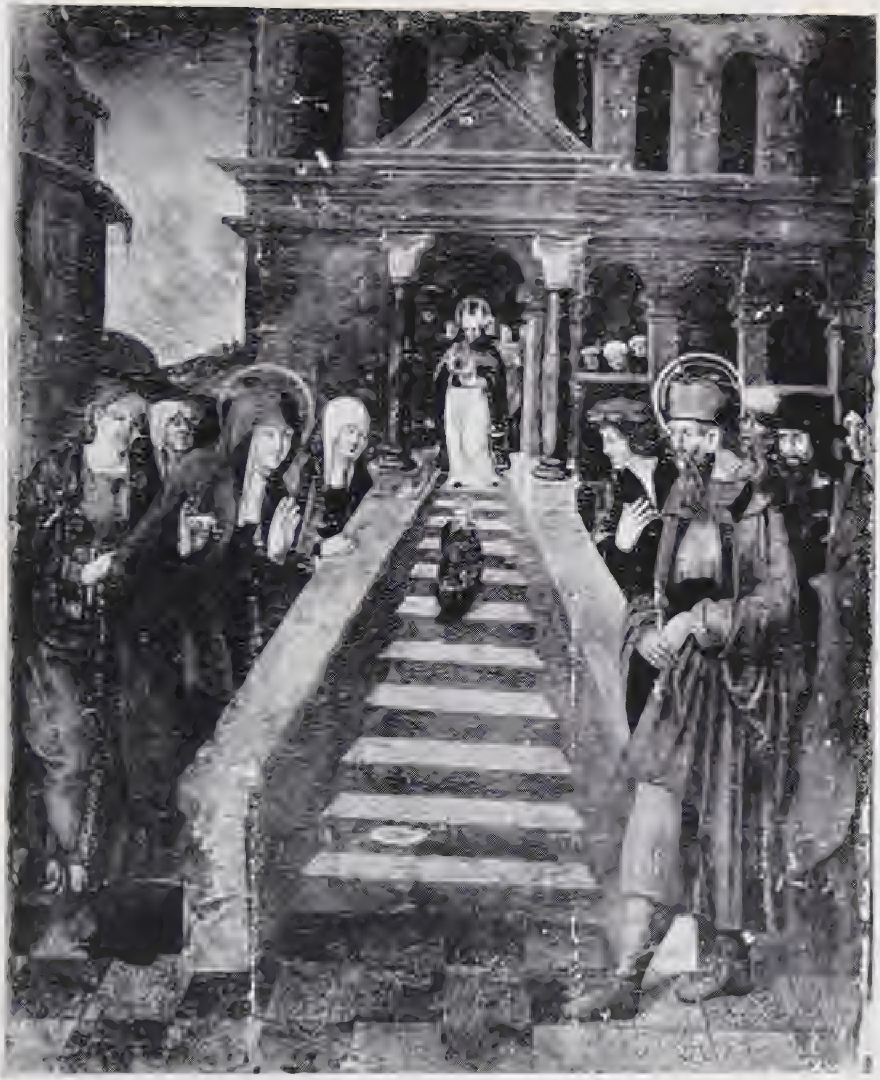

FIG. 100. PEDRO GASCÓ OR A FOLLOWER. PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN. CARRERAS CANDI COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

St. Anne and her hooded companion with a hand on the balustrade and as, at San Esteban, in Tobias and, at Castellón, in the midwife bending over St. Anne's bed. Especially to be remarked is the analogy of the companion, in strained religious ardor, to Pedro's representation of St. Anne on the bridal chest in the Vich Museum. The prominent attendant at the left behind St. Anne in the Carreras panel is a favorite feminine type with Pedro both in countenance and disposition of the hair, illustrated conspicuously by the Madonna in the Vich Holy Family guaranteed by Gudiol. The St. Joachim falls precisely in the class of such bearded men of piercing glance as the St. Joseph in the documented Epiphany at Vich or the kneeling Magus in the Perpignan rendering of this theme. Nor is there lacking one of the youths with whom he likes to punctuate his crowds, here leaning forth behind the Virgin's father. The author, whether Pedro Gascó himself or a faithful imitator, should never have tried the academic stunt of occupying the whole centre of the composition by projecting directly at us the staircase that little Mary climbs, for he was not armed with enough Italian science to solve the difficult problem of the perspective.

CHAPTER X

JAIME FONTANET THE ELDER

Chiefly a maker of stained glass but also a painter of altarpieces, this master was one of the most prominent figures in the artistic *milieu* of Barcelona during the first half of the sixteenth century, but, like many of his compeers both in Spain and the rest of Europe, he has suffered the unhappy fate of being practically unknown to us in pictorial style. His one documented retable over the high altar of the parish church at Molíns de Rey, just west of Barcelona, has perished, and from what, as the records seem to show, was his more prolific output in stained glass, there have remained to us only three windows in the apse of the Barcelona church of Santos Justo y Pastor, achievements that, by reason of the difference in medium, forestall a very accurate conception of his attainments in painting on panel or cloth. He came from a family that originated in the town of Iborra, northeast of Cervera, and had already produced an outstanding worker in glass and painter, Gil Fontanet; and whether a son or some other younger relative, Jaime first emerges to the light of history when, on January 2, 1508, we find him, as a member of the society of painters at Barcelona, paying his share in the expense of a non-extant retable that the organization was causing to be constructed in honor of their patron, St. Luke, in the church of Sta. María de la Merced in the city.[1] I will not encumber our pages with rehearsing his commissions, his honorable activity in the guild of bridle-makers (where the painters were enrolled as well as in the society of St. Luke), or his transactions in business, since all these items can readily be found in the bibliography comprised in the underlying note,[2] but I confine myself to the retable and the windows recorded at the beginning of the present paragraph. He had died by March 27, 1550,[3] when there is listed as his heir his son of the same name, Jaime Fontanet the younger, who followed the paternal profession and to whom there

---

[1] See above, p. 170, and below, p. 495.

[2] El Conde de la Viñaza, *Adiciones*, etc., II, 201; and J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 39 and 43; II, 3 (1944), 18; and V, 3–4 (1947), 258, 318, and 326.

[3] *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 21, n. 23.

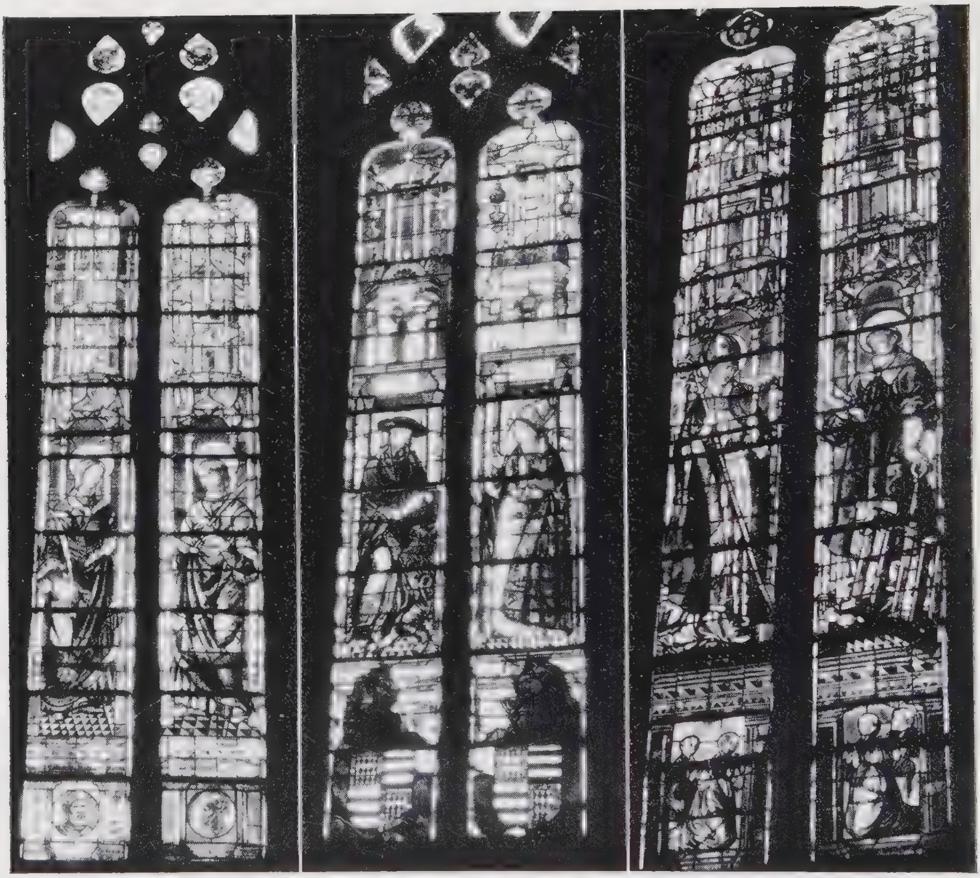

Fig. 101. JAIME FONTANET. WINDOWS. CHURCH OF SANTOS JUSTO Y PASTOR, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

must refer all documentary notices after this date about an artist so called. Indeed some of the references immediately prior to the early spring of 1550 may well have to do with the son, as appears certainly the case in a Jaime Fontanet's assistance in the polychromy of the retable at Lloret de Mar, the paintings in which were executed by Pedro Serafí,[4] since in 1555 Jaime Fontanet II demanded payment for the job that a painter of this appellation had contracted to do in 1548 or just before.[5]

The retable of Molíns de Rey is an irreparable loss. The Catalan sculptor, Bernardo Batlle, agreed on March 13, 1526, to make the central statue and carved frames in the altarpiece, and Jaime Fontanet was asked on October 29, 1531, to carry out the painted sections and the polychromy. The Crucifixion was to be in the usual spot, the main pinnacle; the two lower lateral compartments were to contain scenes from the story of St. Michael; the subjects of the two upper spaces at the sides are left in the contract to the joint arbitrament of the lady of the manor at Molíns de Rey, Doña Hipólita de Requeséns and of the officers of the town; on the tabernacle were to be depicted the customary themes for the spot, Christ between the mourning Virgin and St. John, whereas again the lady and the local authorities were to choose the figures for the flanking predella; and the stipulations comprise even the traditional representations for the doors beside the altar, Sts. Peter and Paul. There was likewise consigned to our master the painting of a sacred personage and an escutcheon on each *guardapolvo*. Fontanet was ordered also to paint (in fresco?) above the retable two angels and to exercise his other profession in making three windows for the apse.[6]

It is only in this profession that his memory is preserved to us in a concrete achievement, three windows, like those of Molíns de Rey, in the apse of Santos Justo y Pastor at Barcelona, labors that the records of the church show him to have executed in 1522 [7] (Fig. 101). Each of the windows displays the paired and standing forms of saints, set in shrines of still Gothic architecture in the two lateral pieces, but, in the central specimen, of structures of the Renaissance in accordance with the transitional nature of Fontanet's art. In this central space the two saints are Jerome and Augustine (or Ambrose?), and, like the other windows, it includes a smaller zone beneath each sacred personage, here filled with the escutcheon of the donor, the rector of the church, who was also the great archdeacon of the cathedral and notable patron of the arts, Luis Desplá y Oms, portrayed dourly but at a relatively youthful age by Bermejo in the guise of the commissioner of this master's Pietà, now in the cathedral and dating from as much earlier as 1490.[8] The shield under both saints is upheld by a Prophet (?) in half length. The window on the left is reserved for deceptively feminine-looking effigies of the edifice's patrons, the youthful martyrs and brothers, St. Justus and Pastor, holding as emblems the executioner's knives that were the instruments of their decollation;[9] and the lower zone, where the decorative *motifs*, as at the bottom of the other lateral window, have passed into the Renaissance, contains two heads of warriors (imagined as Jewish heroes or kings?). The standing figures in this other window, at the right, are Sts. Blaise and Lawrence; and kneeling donors fill the lower register. In the right compartment are shown two clerics, one of whom would be Luis Desplá portrayed more benevolently than by Bermejo and as an older man, since he survived only two years more, until 1524;[10] and to the left compartment is relegated a lady accompanied by a gentleman who may not be a priest, both of them doubtless kin of the rector.

---

[4] See above, p. 212.

[5] See Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 13–15, especially n. 8 on p. 15.

[6] See Madurell, *ibid.*, V, 3–4 (1947), 258, 318, and 326.

[7] Madurell, *ibid.*, II, 3 (1944), 21, n. 23.

It is indeed a pity that no other works of Fontanet have survived or at least been recognized, for he manifests himself here an artist of considerable stature, retaining perhaps more than any of his rivals the slim elegance and delicate spirituality of Huguet. If any creations of his, paintings or windows, should some time emerge, they ought to be easy to recognize, because the Sts. Jerome and Lawrence possess a distinctive kind of countenance, narrow and with pronounced cheek-bones. On a subsequent page I shall propose the dim possibility that he might have done a panel of six figures of saints in the cathedral of Barcelona, with so little conviction, however, that I have not dared to place the discussion anywhere else than in the chapter on works of unascertained authorship.

---

[8] See my vol. V, p. 108.

[9] See vol. VII, pp. 242 and 777.

[10] In vol. V, p. 108, I wrongly gave the date of his death as 1523.

CHAPTER XI

LESSER CATALAN PAINTERS OF THE PERIOD

1. Juan Gatón

So slight is this individual's talent and so slight the number of his works which have come down to us that he would scarcely be worth our notice if he did not stand forth, in contrast to so many anonymous Masters of This or That, through the preservation of his actual name. We arrive at his artistic personality by the documentation of two panels of St. Augustine and St. Monica now in the Museum of Vich (Fig. 102). On November 12, 1520,[1] he acknowledges payment for a panel of St. Augustine that he had executed at the order of the cleric of Manresa, Juan Torra, and at the same time he agrees to do a companion-piece of Augustine's mother, St. Monica, both pictures probably destined, though it is not specifically so stated, for Sta. María de la Seo in the town, a church in which Torra held the office of canon-sacristan. The effigy of St. Monica was to be surmounted by a pinnacle embodying some event from her son's life, which has perished or at least has not reached the Vich Museum; and the likewise now untraceable panel of "the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ" for which he was remunerated together with the St. Augustine may well have been a Crucifixion correspondingly used as a pinnacle above the great Doctor of the Church, since it was a subject commonly appearing at the summit of sacred works of art, whatever their principal theme.

Our further notices of Gatón fail to authenticate any other extant works. He was married in the cathedral of Barcelona on January 12, 1509; with the painters Pedro Terré and Jaime Cardona, he gave an opinion, on May 9, 1515, in regard to the merits of the polychromy that Joan de Burgunya had done on the frames of the retable in Sta. María del Pino at Barcelona; [2] and he is still described

---

[1] With the exception of the notice of Gatón's marriage, published by José Mas in the *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras*, Barcelona, VI (1911–1912), 310, the data will be found in Joachim Sarret i Arbós, *Art i artistes manresans*, Manresa, 1916, pp. 28–33, as well as in his *Historia religiosa de Manresa*, Manresa, 1924, p. 138, and in J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 86.

[2] See above, p. 80.

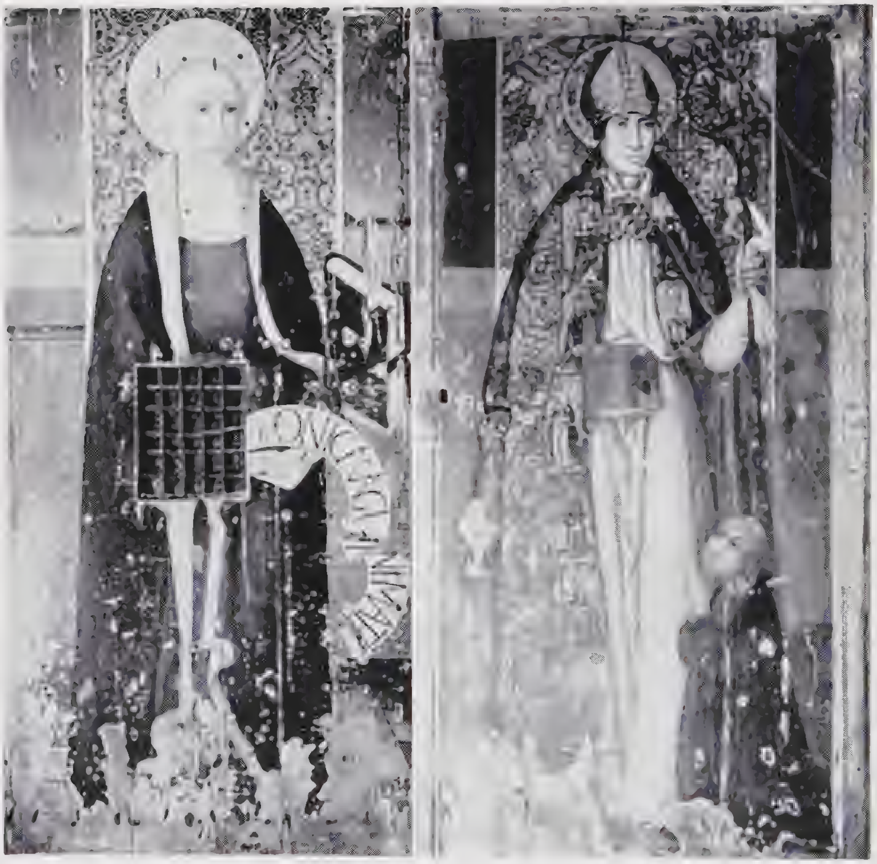

Fig. 102. JUAN GATÓN. SS. MONICA AND AUGUSTINE. MUSEUM, VICH

(*Photo. Thomas*)

as a citizen of this capital when on July 20 and August 28, 1517, he was paid by the treasurer of Manresa, whither he had transferred his residence, for a (lost) retable of St. Christopher. The year 1520 was a busy time for him, since, in addition to the pieces ordered by the canon Torra, he painted the tabernacle in Sta. María in Manresa, for which he was remunerated on May 3,[3] and he contracted on August 27 to gild and to decorate with figures the uprights and *guardapolvos* of a retable in the Carmelite church of the town. These works have disappeared from our knowledge, but it is significant that in the Carmelite document he is already called a citizen of Manresa, where he kept an establishment to the latest date to which the archives carry him. In a former volume[4] we have had occasion to reject the attribution to Gatón of two panels of the Nativity and Epiphany that at least until the second decade of the present century existed in the parish church of Vilatorrada, just north of Manresa, an edifice for which he contracted in 1523 to do a retable of the two St. Johns. Our final allusions to the painter reveal him on July 4, 1527, and March 27, 1536, as engaged in transactions of real estate in Manresa, although in the record of the latter deal he is entitled a citizen not only of this town but also of Barcelona, either because he divided his time between the two places or because he proudly wished his earlier connection with the capital to be recalled.

St. Augustine and his mother are represented in narrow, vertical panels almost two metres in height, considerably injured,[5] the original use of which in the church at Manresa is disclosed neither by the document nor by the nature of the pictures themselves. In the old mediaeval way, rigid, brocaded fabrics hung in front of parapets still serve as settings to the effigies. Above the parapet of St. Monica there is limned a delicate stretch of hills that resembles (probably just by chance) the nature and pictorial manner of Piero della Francesca's landscapes; and it is likely that in corresponding spots behind St. Augustine repaint conceals a similar vista. He is accompanied by the kneeling figure of the donor, the canon Juan Torra, in compara-

---

[3] The document states that the commission for the tabernacle had originally been given to a painter García Guarda, who had died. If this name is a scribe's mistake for Huguet's follower Gabriel Guardia (vol. VII, p. 333), it would probably extend Guardia's lease of life to *c.* 1520, since no long time would naturally have intervened between his decease and Gatón's assumption of the order.

[4] VII, p. 409.

[5] The panel of St. Monica has been further mutilated by the employment of its central portion, at a subsequent time, for a receptacle of some sort (a reliquary?).

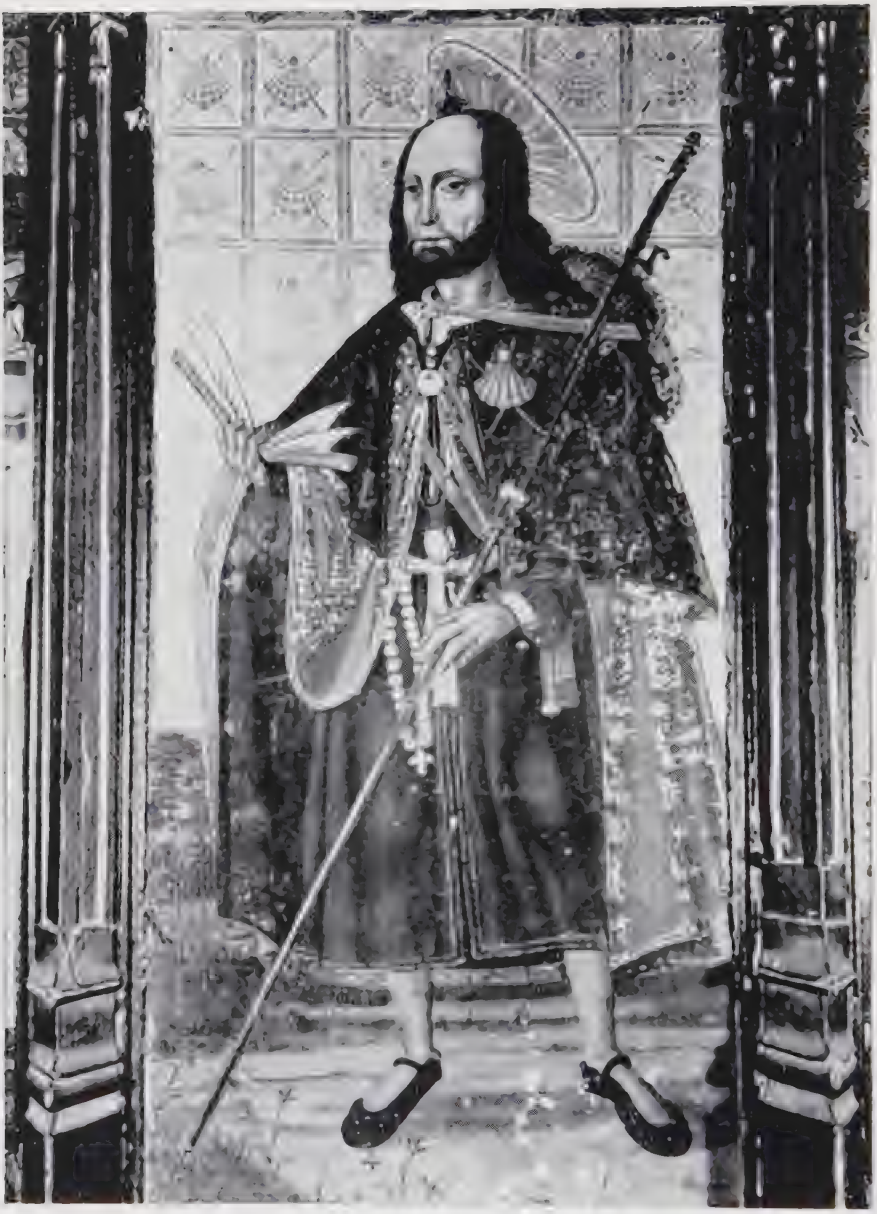

Fig. 103. ST. JAMES MAJOR, CENTRE OF RETABLE, BY A PAINTER UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF JUAN GATÓN (?). PARISH CHURCH, CENTELLAS

(*Photo. Mas*)

tively reduced size, and St. Monica is identified by an inscription on a banderole. The style manifested in the panels constitutes a belated and not very competent persistence of the Catalan manner of the end of the fifteenth century, with little more to betoken the dawn of the Renaissance than the less stiff and less primitive execution of the sacred personages simulated as embroidered on the orphreys of St. Augustine's cope, which itself, however, continues the old emphasis of the school of Catalonia upon brilliant brocades as formal, decorative elements in compositions. The figure of the donor looks to be a more incisive portrait than the average of Gatón's attainments would have justified us in expecting from him.

At Centellas, on the road between Manresa and Vich and therefore in a situation where we should have guessed that strains from the two cities might meet, the parish church contains a retable obviously painted by an imitator of a master active at Vich, Juan Gascó, and yet apparently exhibiting affiliations with the modes of Gatón. Except for a pinnacle of the Last Judgment, the main body of the retable consists of single, standing effigies of saints, James Major in the principal compartment (Fig. 103), Cosmas and Damian at the upper level on the sides, and an unidentifiable pope and Roch in the lower tier. The predella aligns half-lengths of seven further canonized personages, who, like the principal figures above, are relieved against gold backgrounds diapered with Gascó's *motif* of ornamented squares and lozenges. The practice of Gascó is followed also in the partial variation of the inner ornaments of the squares, and for Santiago the pattern of the ornament appropriately takes the form of a design based on the pilgrim's shell and staff.

A number of the figures, especially the Santiago, the St. Damian, and the pope, are so arrestingly similar to Gatón's Sts. Augustine and Monica in hard, unrelenting character of the countenances and in stony glare of the eyes that he could be declared the retable's author, were it not for the emergence also of disconcerting differences. The chief of these differences is the markedly broad and stubby canon of the human form in contrast to the elongated proportions of the Sts. Augustine and Monica as well as of the figures embroidered on the former's cope. We could argue that the elongation might have been occasioned by the unknown purpose which the documented panels served and by accommodation of the figures on the orphreys to the verticality of their positions, or it could be maintained that an artist,

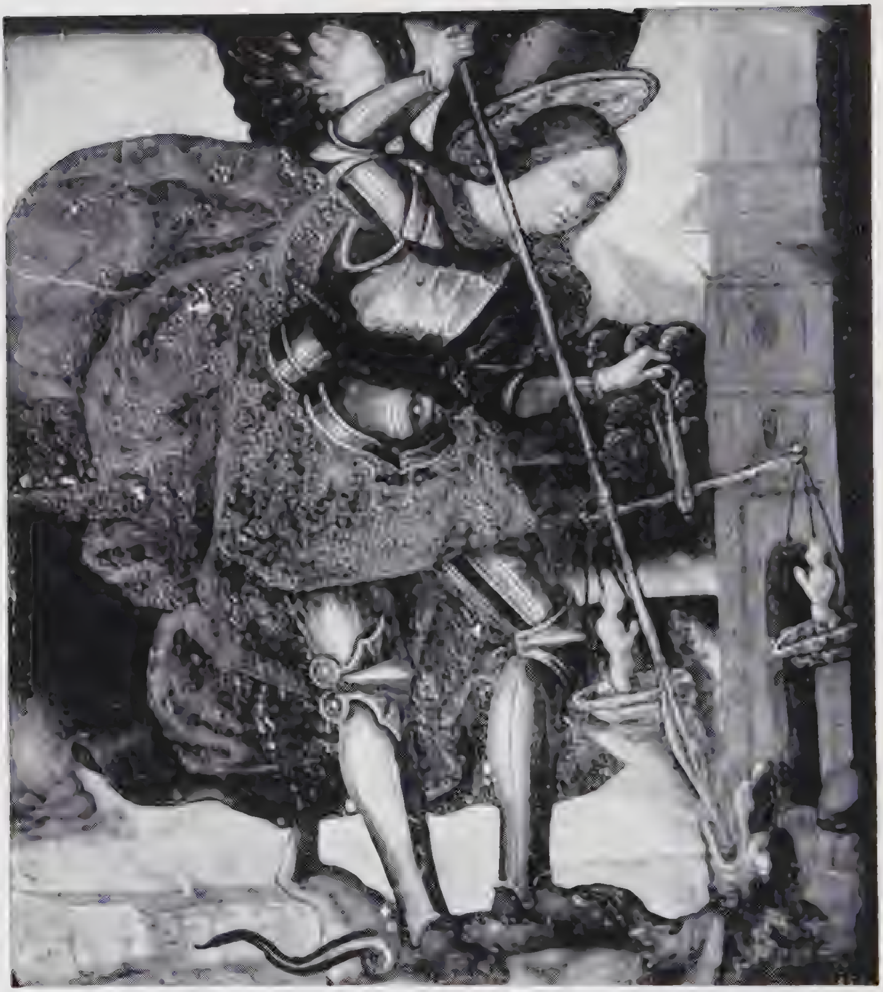

Fig. 104. ST. MICHAEL, BY A PAINTER UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF JUAN GATÓN (?). BATLLORI COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

particularly so rustic a one as the man responsible for the Centellas retable, might in general vary the proportions of the body from commission to commission. There are, indeed, further analogies in the retable to the Manresa panels, as, for instance, a certain resemblance of the mortals rising from the dead in the Last Judgment to the portrait of Juan Torra; and yet, if we apply the sternness of scientific connoisseurship, the evidence at our disposal permits no more definite an assertion than that the retable was produced in the circle of Juan Gascó by a craftsman who seems to have stood in some sort of relation to Juan Gatón. If this craftsman was indeed Gatón, he had enrolled himself as a follower of Gascó to a more tangible extent than the two documented panels reveal.

It is as little more than a mere suggestion that I propose the Centellas painter, whoever he was, for the dubious honor of having executed a St. Michael in the Batllori de Orovio Collection at Barcelona (Fig. 104), although the many hours that I have perhaps foolishly wasted in studying the picture have discovered no other Spaniard of the period into whose manner it so neatly fits. The analogy in stocky physique and in lumbering technical endowment is obvious. The proportions of the body are comparable especially in the St. Roch of the Centellas retable, behind whom also the drapery billows forth arbitrarily in much the same way. The small St. Michael in the Centellas Last Judgment has a different kind of countenance, but it is to be noted that the pose is nearly identical, even in the jerky bend at the waist and the defective foreshortening of the torso and elevated right arm. The facial type cannot be paralleled in the Centellas altarpiece, but in a large effigy of the archangel it might have been expected that the author would have called into play what powers he possessed for depicting beauty of person. The halo is worn in the jaunty mode of the saints in the altarpiece, and even its figuration is not too diverse.

2. The Premiá Master (Bernardo Goffer, Jerónimo Goffer, or Antonio Marqués?)

Although the painter whom it now falls to our lot to discuss may equal any one of the three personalities named above, the complicated evidence is so inconclusive as to oblige us to resort to the indefinite pseudonym, the Premiá Master, who, after all, might even be identical with some other artist than the triad mentioned but whom no discovered document has yet introduced into the problem. The balance perhaps tips a little in favor of Jerónimo Goffer. The Premiá Master, whose style places him in the very early years of the sixteenth century, takes his title from the fact that two of his works, both now in the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, come from S. Pedro, the parish church of Premiá de Dalt, northeast of Barcelona; and Jerónimo's father, Bernardo Goffer, who hailed from Germany (which in the terminology of the time might include Flanders) or at least belonged to a German family already established in Catalonia, is documented to have done a retable for this edifice between 1496 and 1500.[6] Now, by records that stretch from 1502 to 1510 we are informed[7] that Bernardo and Jerónimo Goffer were united in the execution of the retable of St. Martin over the high altar of the parish church at San Martín de Provensals, a suburb of Barcelona; but, since the father died in 1502,[8] the lion's share in the undertaking must have been carried out by the son. The retable perished in the revolutionary disturbances of 1936, and, although we possess a photograph of 1928 [9] showing that it was a work of *c.* 1500, the reproduction is so dim as to reveal nothing of use for studying its author, except in one small detail, the head of the saint in the left door of the altarpiece. Very significantly, this head turns out to be impressively similar to that of St. James Major in a fragment by the Premiá Master from Premiá [10] and only somewhat less analogous to that of St. Peter on a retable's door from Moguda of which there is good reason for believing that the Premiá Master was the author.[11] The evidence, of course, is very slight and entirely insufficient for proving that the Premiá Master was Jerónimo Goffer, but it does carry some small weight to support the proposition. We should have to make, in addition, the venturesome assumptions that either one of the preserved works from Premiá surely by the Premiá Master is connected with the documents of 1496–1500 and that even as early as this the son was executing the major part in the commissions received by his father and had already adopted the manner of the early Renaissance. It is likely that Bernardo, whose activity stretches back as far as 1460,[12] never progressed beyond mediaeval modes, whereas Jerónimo can be traced in the records as late as 1526.[13]

---

[6] J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 37. In the various documents the surname has been read as Goffer, Gaffer, and Boffer, but the first spelling is now generally thought to be correct. That Jerónimo was the son of Bernardo is affirmed by Madurell, without stating his authority, in *Colegio Notarial de Barcelona, Estudios históricos y documentos de los Archivos de Protocolos*, I (1948), 123.

[7] J. M. Madurell in the publication of the Colegio Notarial de Barcelona mentioned in the immeditaely preceding note, p. 123. Sanpere y Miquel (*Los cuatrocentistas catalanes*, I, 313) asserts that the town of San Martín de Provensals was the source of the retable of St. Martin in the Museum of Catalan Art, Barcelona, which I analyzed in volume VII, pp. 409–412, and a provenience from the parish church of this town has hitherto been unanimously accepted; but the present scholarly director of the Museum, Don Juan Ainaud de Lasarte, writes me that he is not cognizant of any certain proof of the allegation. In any case, the style of the retable in the Museum dates it fairly early in the second half of the fifteenth century, so that it cannot be the one documented as having been done by the Goffers at the commencement of the Cinquecento. If there is any real foundation for the predicated derivation from the parish church of San Martín de Provensals, we might escape the difficulty by assuming the strange phenomenon of the retable of 1502–1510 having so soon been substituted over the high altar for the example now in the Museum; or the possibility, since the church is dedicated to St. Martin, that the example in the Museum was a second production honoring him, not over the high altar, but in some chapel. Inasmuch, however, as Sanpere specifies no further than a provenience from the town of San Martín de Provensals, the retable in the Museum might have come from some other place in the village than the parish church. For Sanpere's wrong attribution of the Museum retable to Antonio de Llonye, see below, p. 682.

[8] In the lists of officers of the guild of bridle-makers at Barcelona, in which the painters were enrolled, he is mentioned as deceased in 1502. His artistic prominence is illustrated by his frequent election to offices in the guild, beginning with 1487: see J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 2 (1944), 67–69.

In the case of Jerónimo's rival for identification with the Premiá Master, Antonio Marqués,[14] we can rely on no stylistic comparisons, however slim, since really authenticated works of his are not known; but we are compelled to turn to mere possibilities in the documents. On August 23, 1504, he contracted to do a retable of unspecified themes [15] for the parish church of Premiá, which, instead of the altarpiece ordered from Bernardo Goffer, might conceivably be one of the two extant works from the edifice by the Premiá Master. The more extensive of these works is a whole retable depicting the Seven Joys

---

[9] I owe the photograph to one of the many generosities of Don Juan Ainaud de Lasarte.

[10] See below, p. 277.

[11] See below, p. 280.

[12] Sanpere, *op. cit.*, I, 8, 9, 91, 92, and 278; J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 36–37; and my vol. VI, p. 547.

[13] J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 42, and II, 3 (1944), 42–43.

[14] For the data on Marqués, see Sanpere, *op. cit.*, II, 206 and LIX–LXII; Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1944), 39–40, and II, 3 (1944), 37–38; and José Gudiol Ricart and Juan Ainaud de Lasarte, *Huguet*, Barcelona, 1948, p. 29.

[15] The document comprises only the heading of the contract.

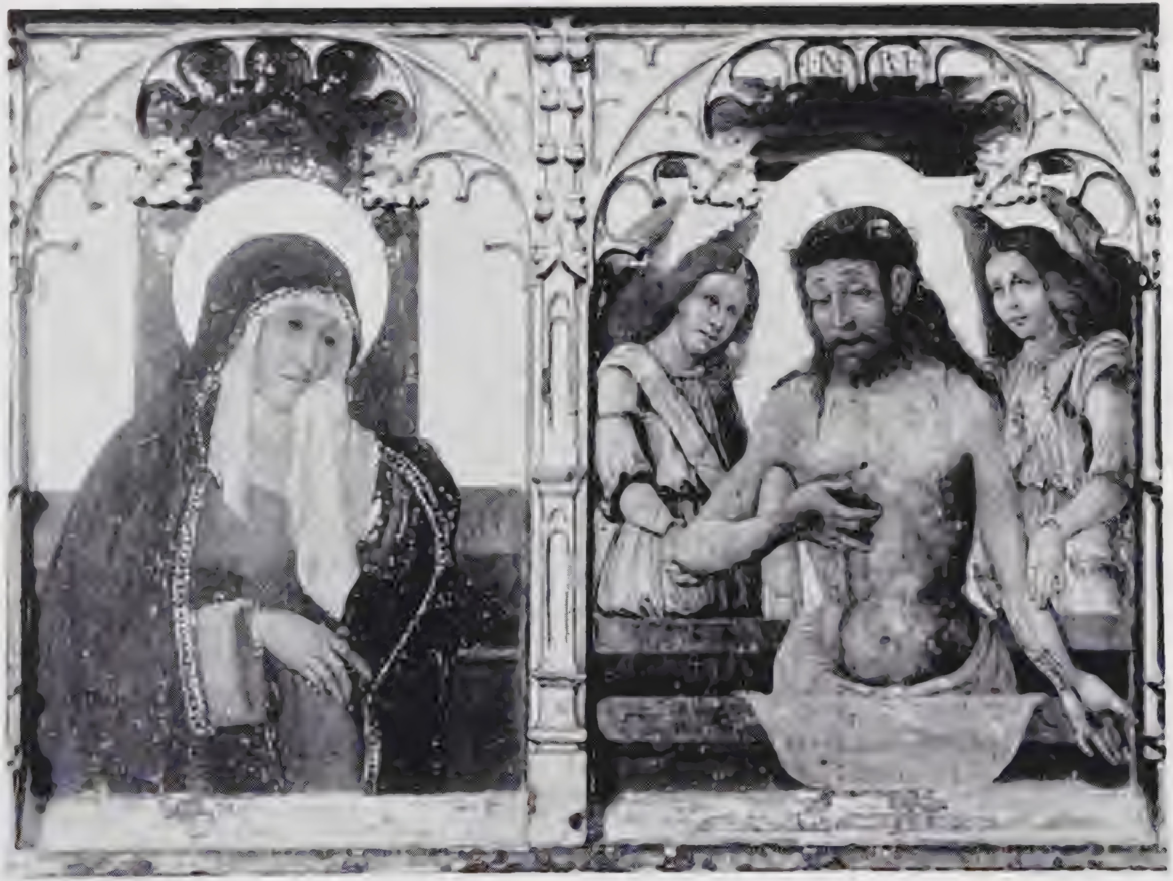

FIG. 105 THE PREMIA MASTER. SECTION OF RETABLE OF THE JOYS OF THE VIRGIN. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA

(Photo. Mas)

of the Virgin; and, since Marqués is documented to have received in 1503 the commission for the lost retable over the high altar of the church of La Merced at Barcelona also devoted to the Virgin's Joys, it might be urged, I fear not very convincingly, that he had gained a reputation for retables of such themes and so was asked to do another for Premiá. Finally, there is always the chance, not, I think, a very likely one, that a considerable number of retables were being made for the church at the time, and that the two preserved works from Premiá by the Premiá Master are examples by an artist other than Jerónimo Goffer or Antonio Marqués and not recorded in the archives as employed in the town. It is curious, when we consider the rival claims of Marqués and Jerónimo Goffer to be equated with the Premiá Master, that both Bernardo Goffer and Marqués served in 1494 as experts in the financial difficulties after Huguet's death concerning the payments to his daughter Eulalia for his contributions to the retable of Sarriá.

As set up in the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, when last I saw it, the central compartment of the retable of the Seven Joys contained an earlier, Gothic statue of the Madonna, probably a substitution for a carved image of her, contemporary with the paintings. Román Arnet, writing in 1882,[16] describes a figure of Christ upon the cross, presumably meaning a piece of sculpture, as ensconced in this compartment of the retable, which, he says, was then to be seen in the sacristy of the church at Premiá, but this, as unsuited to the principal section of a monument honoring Our Lady, must also have taken the place of the original occupant of the niche. The themes chosen for the paintings of the Virgin's Joys [17] are: at the ends of the predella, the Annunciation and Nativity; at the sides of the statue, the Epiphany, Resurrection, Pentecost, and Assumption; and, in the pinnacle, the Coronation. The only other parts are the three panels in the predella's middle, the Christ of the Mass of St. Gregory flanked by the mourning Mother and St. John, all rendered in half length but in larger scale than the forms in any of the narrative panels (Fig. 105).

We see in the retable a painter of average gifts just emerging from the restrictions of the primitive into the more correct modes of representation that marked the Renaissance. He is not ambitious for novelties in composition, but it is difficult to perceive any very con-

---

[16] In *Butlletí de la Associació d'Excursións Catalana*, IV (1882), 16.

[17] For some variation in the subjects of the Joys, see my vol. VIII, p. 294.

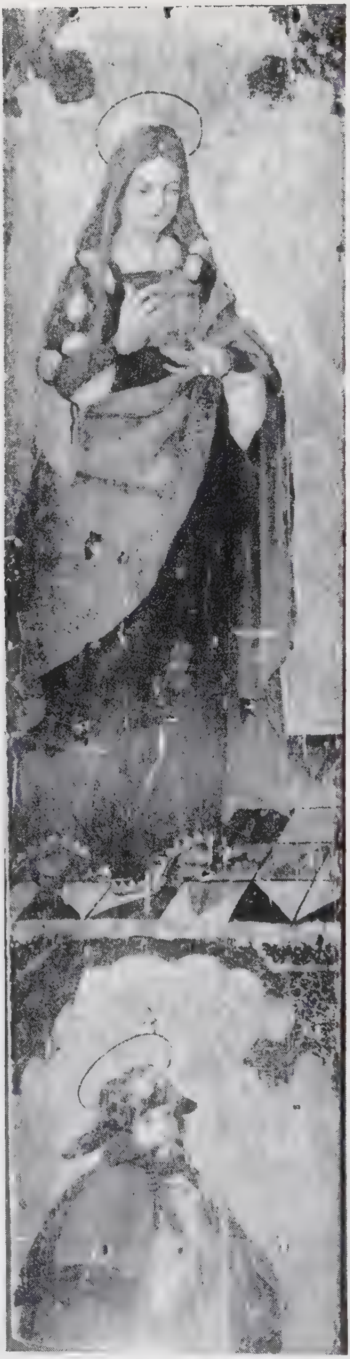

Fig. 106. THE PREMIÁ MASTER. STS. MARY MAGDALENE AND JAMES MAJOR, FRAGMENT OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

crete indebtedness to his mediaeval predecessors in the Catalan school and thus to deduce under whom he was trained. If a relationship to the school's past is really to be detected, it would be rather to the coterie of the Vergós family than to Huguet and his circle; but the types of the Premiá Master, although not strongly individualized, are distinctively his own. Within the limits of the traditional compositions he has a peculiar, centrifugal manner of showing us some of his actors in profile looking away from the focus of interest, as in the case of the bearded Magus, a soldier at the left in the Resurrection, or two of the Apostles in the Pentecost. The gold backgrounds are still maintained; but they are merely incised with a foliate pattern, and indeed nowhere in the retable do the old embossings continue their ostentatious history. Nevertheless, the contract drawn up a year before, 1503, for the lost altarpiece of La Merced with Antonio Marqués, who *may* be the same as the Premiá Master, demands accentuation by raised and gilded stucco.

The second work from Premiá de Dalt, attributable on internal evidence to our Master, is a mere relic of some other retable, a vertical panel from the uprights or *guardapolvos*, displaying (if we read downwards) the standing figures of St. Lucy, the Magdalene (Fig. 106), and St. James Major (the last preserving only the upper part of the form). We cannot derive the fragment from the retable of the Seven Joys, which is complete in itself. The unity of authorship is sufficiently demonstrated by the likeness of St. Lucy to the left of the two angels supporting Christ in the retable's predella, by the practical identity in the heads of the Magdalene and of the Virgin in the Coronation, and by the analogous treatment of the gold backgrounds. As a valid argument for equating the Premiá Master with Marqués we can hardly resort to the points that in the contract for the church of La Merced particular emphasis is laid upon the stipulation that Antonio was to do three saints on each of the *guardapolvos* and that consequently perhaps decorations of such sections of altarpieces were regarded as one of his specialties.

There is a possibility that we ought to discern the Master's craft in another fragment in the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, the provenience of which from Tiana, close to Premiá de Dalt, affords an objective reason, however slight, for the attribution, since the employment of an artist in one place not infrequently resulted in his summons to a near-lying town. Though of considerably larger size, it is

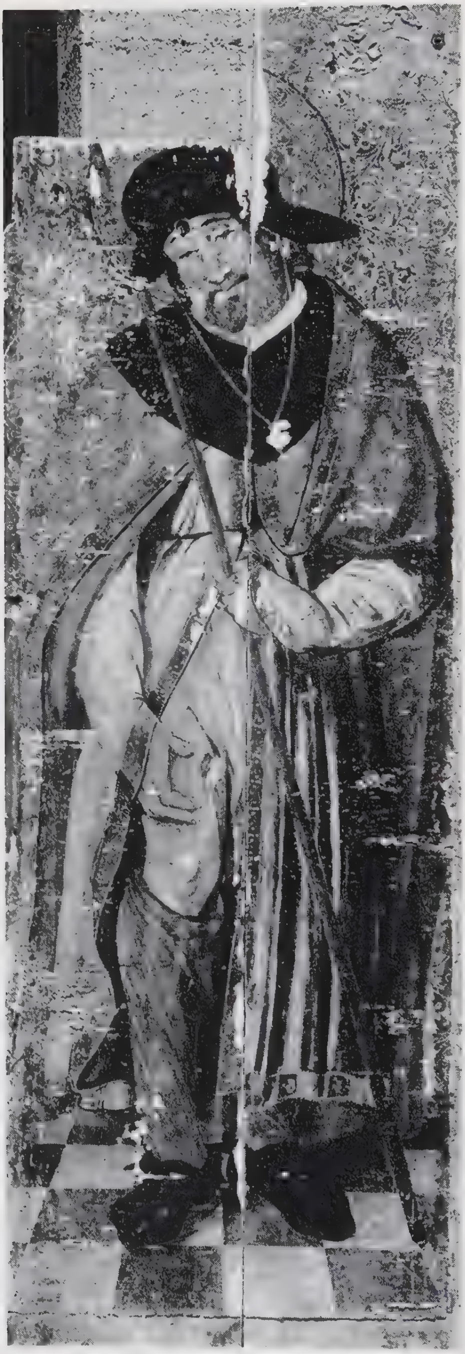

Fig. 107. THE PREMIÁ MASTER (?).
ST. ROCH, FRAGMENT OF RETABLE.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

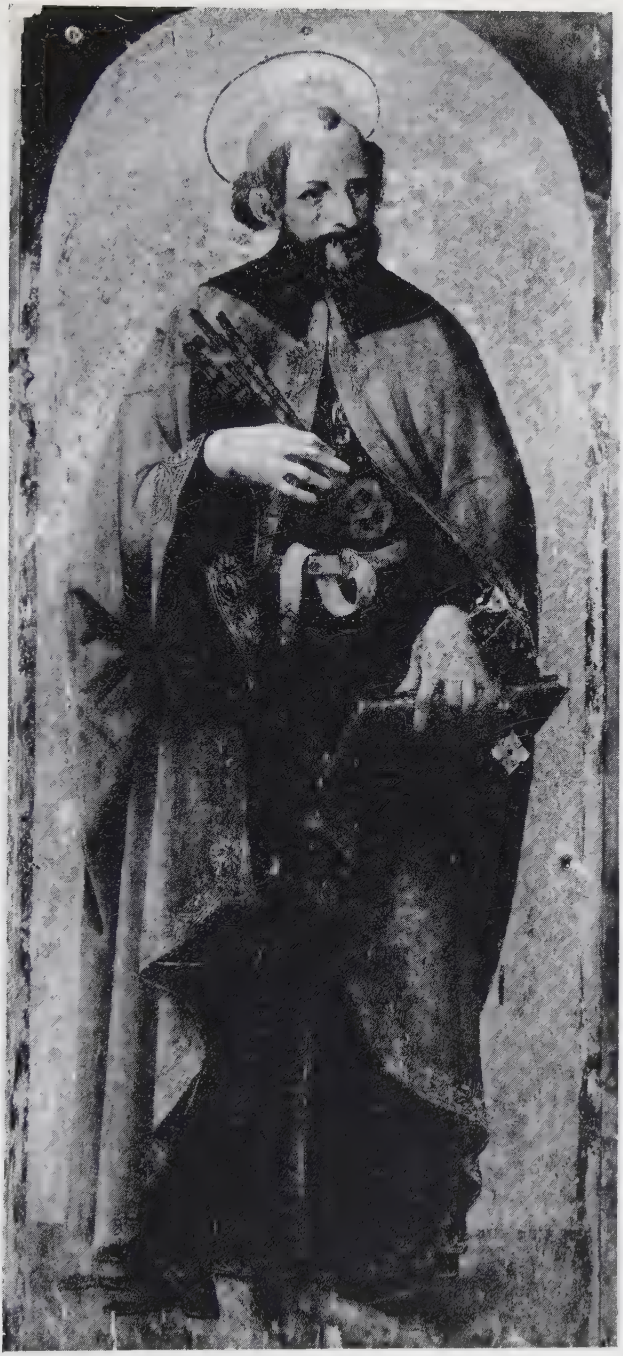

Fig. 108. THE PREMIÁ MASTER (?). ST. PETER, DOOR OF A RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(Photo. Mas)

like the upright piece from Premiá in that it consists of a vertically disposed series of three saints, Roch at the top (Fig. 107), Damian next below, and Jerome at the bottom. The evidence is not sufficiently extensive or concrete for a definite assignment to the Premiá Master, and yet there is enough not to make the proposition absurd. The general pictorial manner and the character of the gold backgrounds are similar, and there are even detailed correspondences. The sickish expression of piety in the St. Roch is almost duplicated in the Apostle directly to the Virgin's left in the Pentecost of the retable of the Seven Joys; customarily both he and St. James Major wear a pilgrim's hat, but the specimen on his head is an exact duplicate of the one that distinguishes Santiago in the Premiá fragment; and Santiago's upward glance is repeated in the Tiana St. Damian.

If we are willing to call the Tiana fragment a work of the Premiá Master, we are provided with good grounds for assigning to him two additional pieces that have entered the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, from the town of Santa Perpetua de Moguda in the same district, doors from the sides of an altar with their regular subjects, full length effigies of Sts. Peter (Fig. 108) and Paul. The former Apostle bears a resemblance to the St. Roch from Tiana; and even a further link with the Master can be adduced, a kind of a likeness of the St. Peter to the Santiago on the vertical fragment that the church of Premiá has contributed to the Diocesan Museum. The figuration of the Tiana haloes is repeated, and the gold backgrounds display the pattern that the Premiá Master regularly employs.

3. The Balaguer Master

We lost in the Spanish civil war the vast retable over the high altar of the church of S. Salvador at Balaguer, which incorporated a style similar to that of Jaime Forner and yet not identical with it (Fig. 109). The subjects comprised a cycle from the life of Christ, to whom the church is dedicated, including a predella of the Passion, a half length of St. Nicholas, and the doors of the altar decorated with the customary themes for these sections, standing effigies of Sts. Peter and Paul.[18] Like Forner, the anonymous author capably

---

[18] At my visit to the church in 1930, I carelessly failed to itemize each subject in the retable. In the *Album Meravella* (a photographic publication of the treasures of nature and art in Catalonia), vol. II (1929), p. 191, it is stated that the retable was constituted of twenty-two compartments.

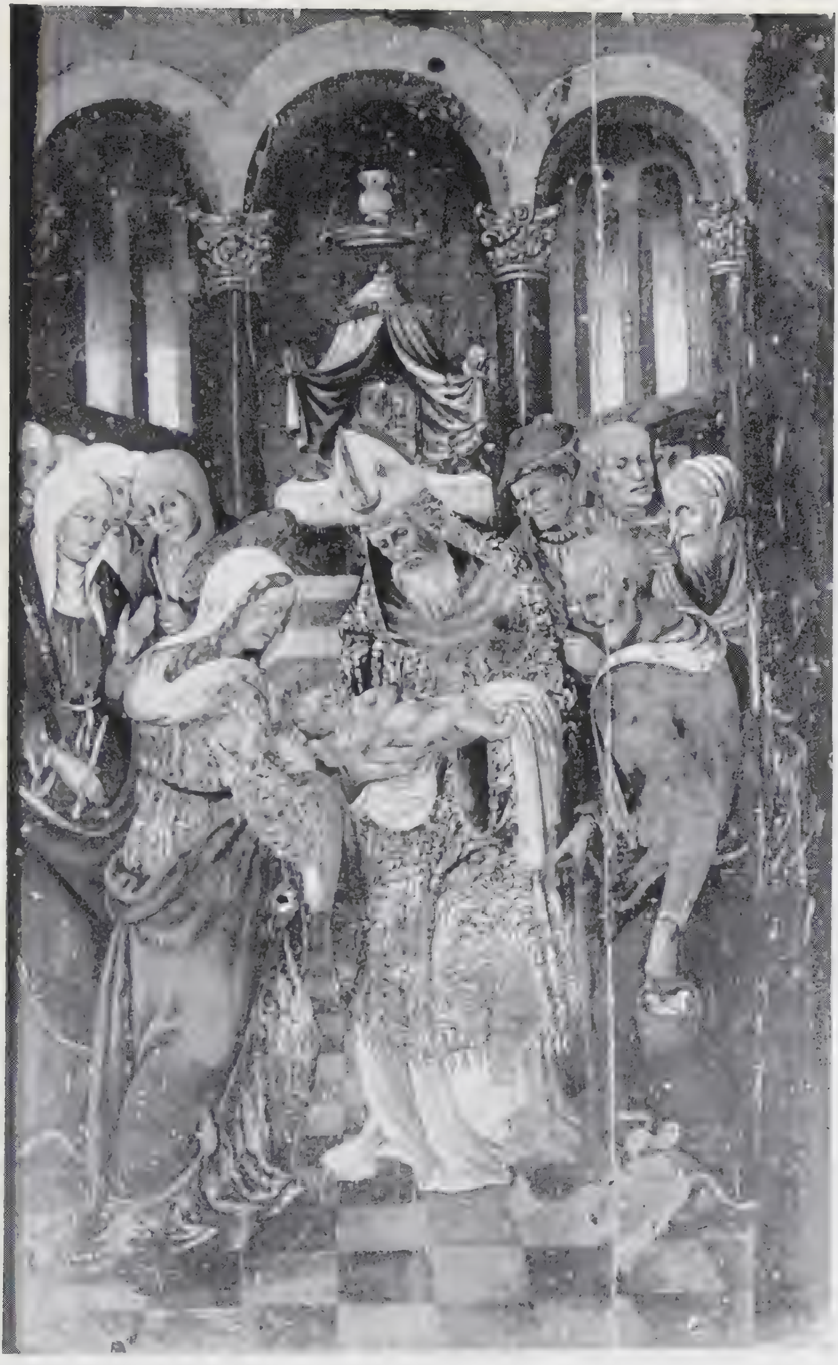

FIG. 109. THE BALAGUER MASTER. PURIFICATION, SECTION OF RETABLE. S. SALVADOR, BALAGUER
(*Photo. Mas*)

handles a manner that has advanced pretty far into the modes of the High Renaissance, retaining from the past little more than brocaded fabrics and the gold of the haloes. The analogy to Forner extends to the adaptations from the compositions of Dürer's prints that Angulo[19] was the first to discern. The scenes of Pilate washing his hands and of the Via Dolorosa follow rather closely the cartoons of the engraved Little Passion of 1512, but with some elasticity in his borrowing the Spanish painter has lifted from the German's representation of the Ecce Homo in the same series the prominent spectator at the lower right and employed him as an onlooker at this spot in his version of the Flagellation. Angulo points out that the Spaniard abjures the harshly Teutonic types of Dürer, and to this transmutation, as well as to smoother draperies, he would have been guided not only by his own Catalan racial tendencies but also by what he knew directly or indirectly of the Italian Renaissance. We should perhaps add to Angulo's list of parallels some degree of indebtedness in the Annunciation to the rendering in Dürer's woodcuts of the Life of the Virgin, which are dated 1502–1505. The composition of the Nativity appears, practically unchanged, in a retable of St. Caprasius by Prudencio and Juan de la Puente, dated in 1533, in the church of S. Miguel at Tarazona[20] in western Aragon; but it is seriously to be doubted that they knew the altarpiece at distant Balaguer, or *vice versa*, and the explanation probably is a joint dependence upon a common source, not, however, any print by Dürer or even Schongauer.

At the other end of Catalonia, in the cathedral of Tortosa, he proves to have done a retable of the Virgin, five compartments of which are preserved and built into a later altarpiece, of 1727, in the chapel of St. Joseph (Fig. 110). The subjects are the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Pentecost, and the Dormition. The Annunciation actually duplicates in composition (with no nearer approach to Dürer), forms, and setting the Balaguer version; and, although the Nativity and Epiphany are varied somewhat in composition from the renderings at Balaguer, the types, methods, and architecture of the Master are indelibly stamped upon them. The turbaned Magus, for instance, reappears in the Epiphany, albeit in a different pose. Ainaud[21] dates the Tortosa retable about 1520, perhaps because a chapel of St.

---

[19] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 327.

[20] M. Abizanda y Broto, *Documentos para la historia artística y literaria de Aragón, sigle XVI*, Saragossa, III (1932), 251.

[21] Article cited at the beginning of the chapter on the St. Felix Master.

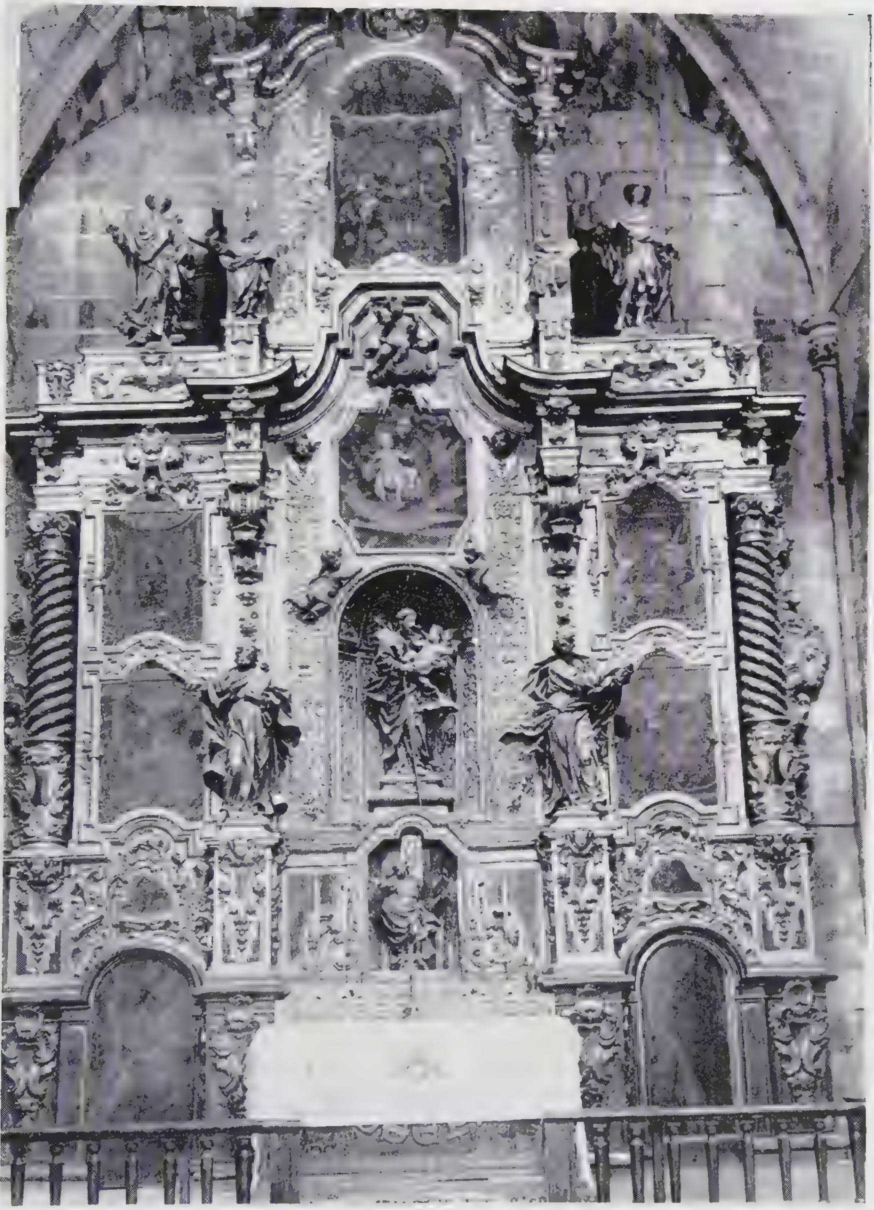

Fig. 110. BAROQUE RETABLE CONTAINING FIVE COMPARTMENTS BY THE BALAGUER MASTER. CATHEDRAL, TORTOSA
(*Photo. Mas*)

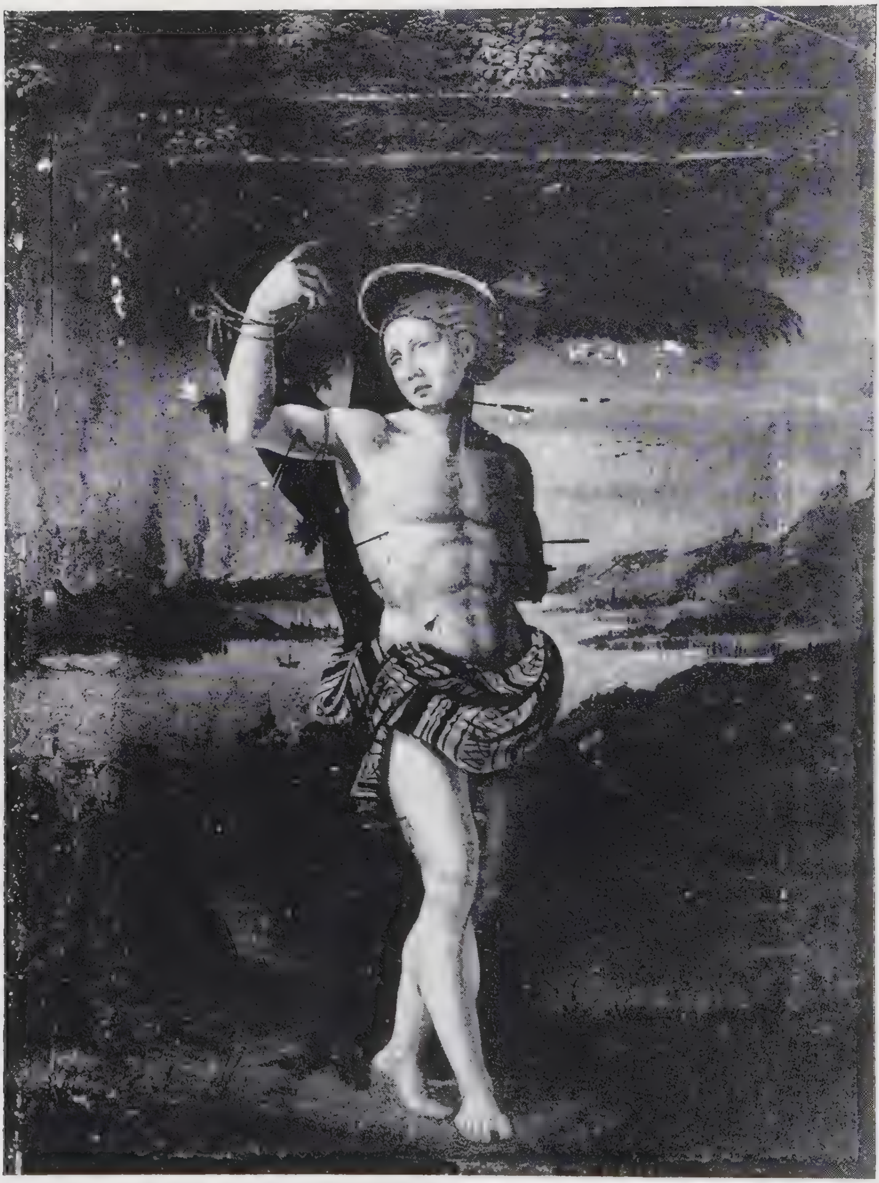

Fig. 111. THE BALAGUER MASTER. ST. SEBASTIAN. CONVENT, PEDRALBES, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Joseph is recorded to have been constructed in the apse of the cathedral in 1522[22] (not the site of the present chapel of Christ's foster-father); but the themes of the five extant panels suit rather a dedication to Our Lady.

Another work that has come within my cognizance as attributable to the Balaguer Master is a panel of St. Sebastian (Fig. 111), one of the components of a conglomerate retable which from the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, has been restored to the convent of Pedralbes in the city and of which sections will subsequently engage our attention.[23] With the other parts of the retable it shares the fate of having lost all traces of its original provenience. To concur in the attribution, one need really search no farther than the entire accord of the head and hair of St. Sebastian with those of Gabriel in the Balaguer and Tortosa Annunciations, but to this may be added such considerations as the correspondence in the position of the legs, from the thighs to the knees, between the martyr and the flagellated Christ in the Balaguer retable or the marked analogy in the nature and sombreness of the landscape to the vistas that the Master's other achievements disclose. Perhaps, however, the most cogent proof is found in a small, concrete detail, the loin-cloth of St. Sebastian, a striped fabric cut from the same bale as the sleeves of the Balaguer Gabriel. Similar stuffs are not very uncommon in the Catalan paintings of the period, but the significant point is that, in distinction, for instance, from those used by the Catalan Monogrammist, the stripes in the panel of the Museo Diocesano and in the Balaguer retable are precisely of the same sort and arrangement. The Master is no bungler, and for the sake of constituting a balance to the ground below in the midst of which St. Sebastian stands, he has artfully spread forth above the sufferer the foliage of the tree to which he is bound.

4. The Rosary Master

The title that I have chosen for the oddly formalizing artist now demanding our comment is derived from his outstanding work, a large panel which from the great Catalan monastery of Santas Creus has passed into the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, and depicts the enthroned Madonna bestowing embossed rosaries upon, at the left, St. Acacius and a delegation of his companions who were put to death

---

[22] José Matamoros, *La Catedral de Tortosa*, Tortosa, 1932, p. 144.

[23] P. 313.

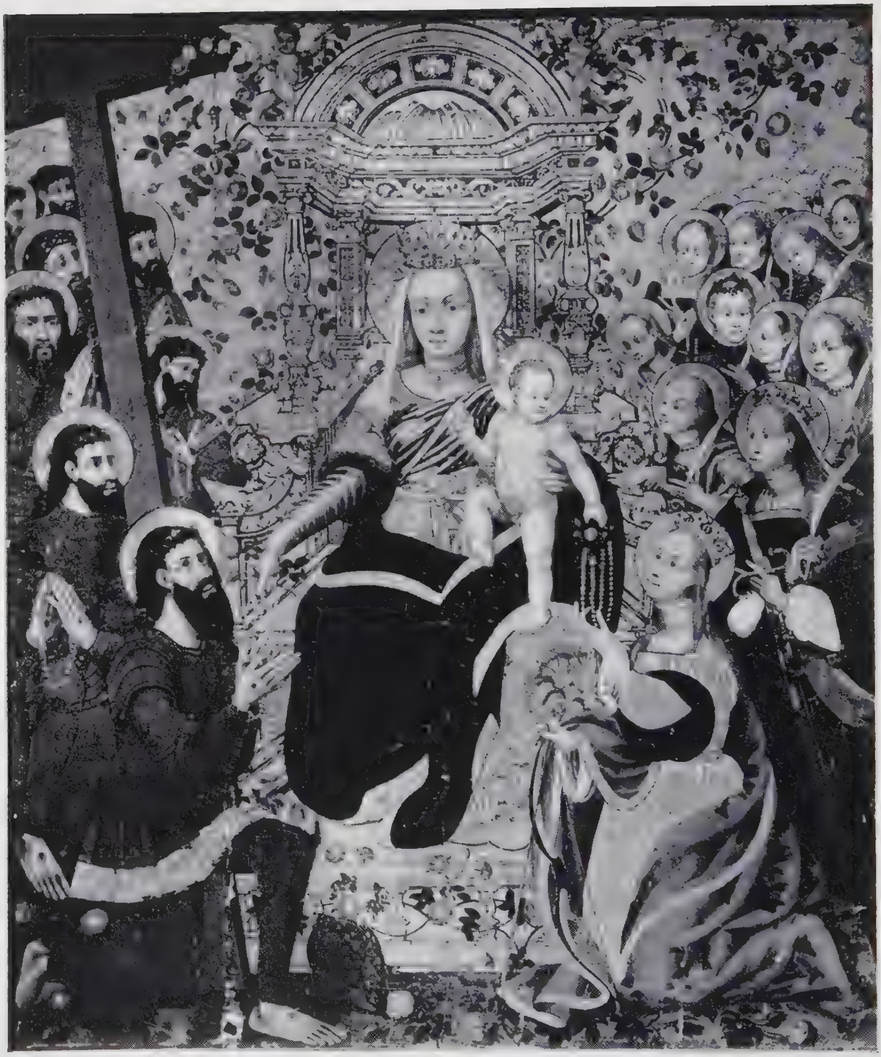

Fig. 112. THE ROSARY MASTER. MADONNA OF THE ROSARY. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

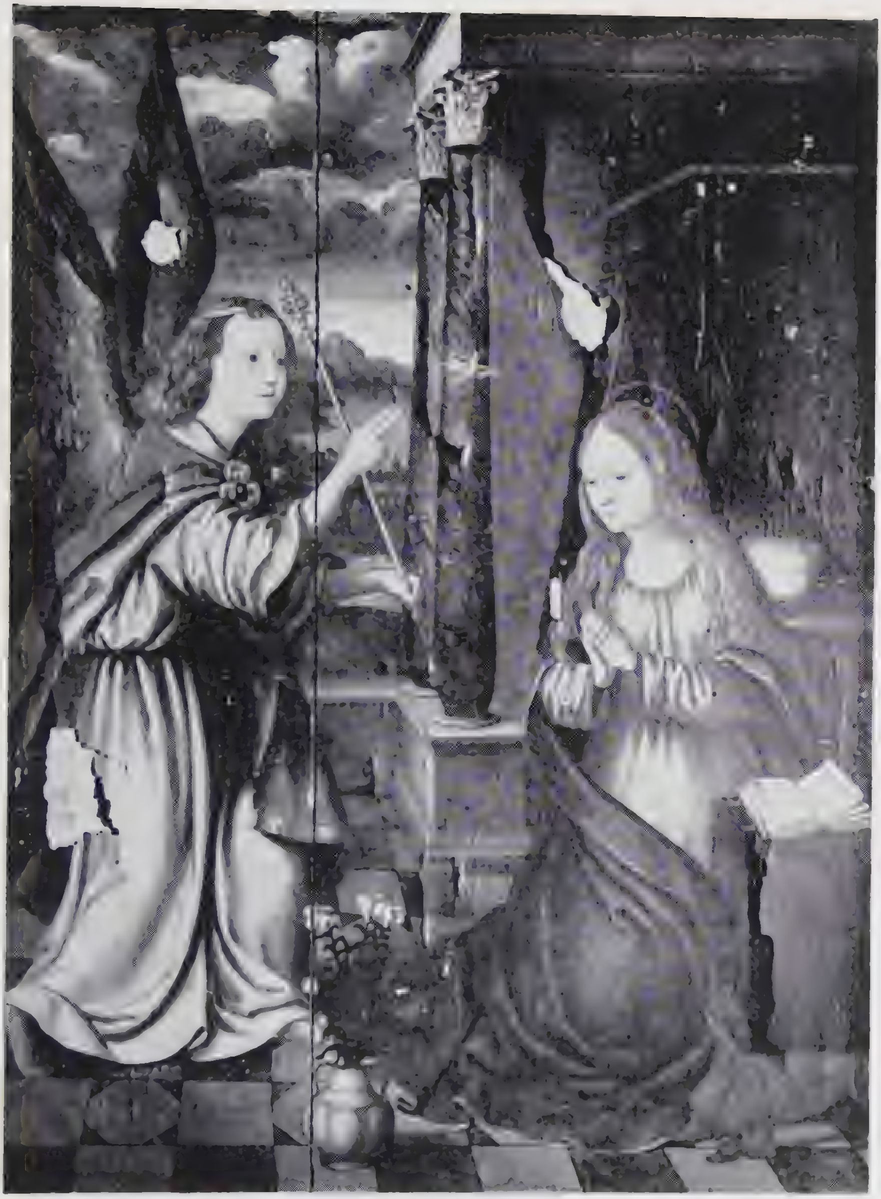

Fig. 113. THE ROSARY MASTER. ANNUNCIATION. CONVENT, PEDRALBES, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

with him on Mount Ararat,[24] and correspondingly, at the right, delivering these objects of devotion to St. Ursula, St. Catherine of Alexandria, and a bevy of other virgin martyrs who lack identifying emblems but may be intended as the former's associates in martyrdom (Fig. 112). The throne of the Virgin, who holds the nude Child, is an ornate Plateresque structure; on its summit, in accordance with the work's dedication to the rosary, two *putti* sport with roses, and sprigs of this flower are lavished everywhere to constitute a background and to decorate the panel's base; the gowns of Our Lady, St. Ursula, and St. Catherine are made of brilliant brocades as in the old mediaeval school, and for the Madonna one of the ostentatious patterns of the brocade is presented in bald frontality according to a frequent practice of the elder days; and gold is still lavished upon haloes, borders of costumes, and the like, the lower edge of St. Acacius's coat of mail being embellished with an inscription of his name. The human figures, however, conform plainly to the pictorial modes of the first half of the sixteenth century and exhibit vague affinities to the manners of such men as the Canillo Master and Jaime Forner. The chief peculiarity of the author is a tendency to stylization, evident, for instance, in an exaggeration of the caprices of contemporary feminine garb and in the beadiness of his personages' eyes.

Another painting securely attributable to him, an Annunciation (Fig. 113), would not have supplied a more accurate pseudonym by which he might be designated, since it is among those works of art now to be seen in the convent of Pedralbes, Barcelona, in regard to which we are uninformed whether they were originally done for the institution or have found their way into it from other sources. We need look no farther than the distinctively beady eyes of Gabriel to be assured that we are in the presence of the Rosary Master, and the uncanny effect is heightened, as in the Child and the women in the picture now in the Tarragona Museum, by the schematic rendering of the eyebrows through a single, sweepingly curved, and abnormally high-raised line as if due to a stroke of a pencil of mascara. Confirmatory factors are not hard to find. Our Lady's countenance in the Pedralbes panel sufficiently resembles the faces of some of the virgin

---

[24] For St. Acacius and the ten thousand martyrs of Mount Ararat, see Guérin, *Les petits Bollandistes*, VII, 209 (on the day of their feast, June 22), and my vol. IX, pp. 537, n. 34, and 542, n. 37.

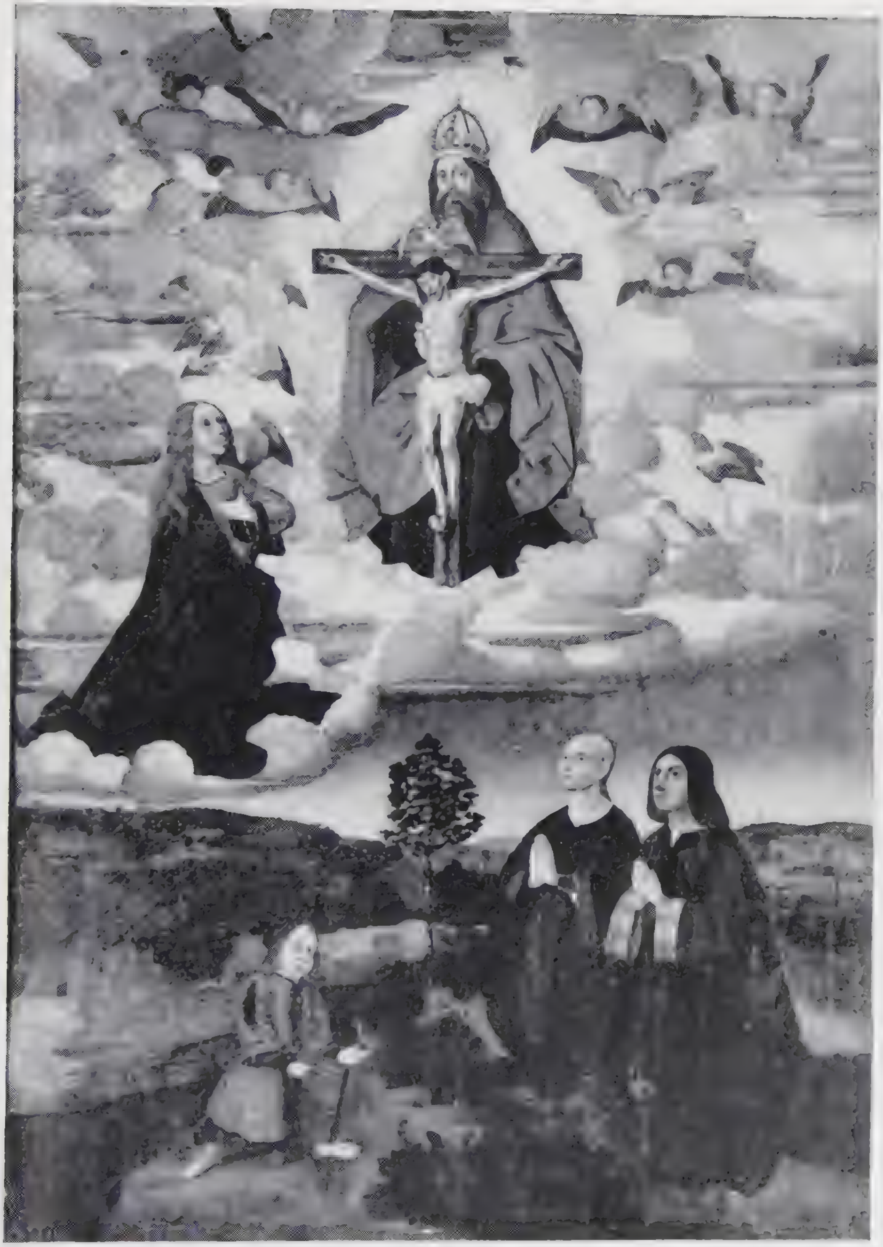

Fig. 114. THE ROSARY MASTER. THE VIRGIN SUPPLICATING THE TRINITY FOR THE DONORS. BELTRÁN Y GÜELL COLLECTION, BARCELONA

(*Photo. Mas*)

martyrs beside the Madonna of the Rosary; the part and adjoining lines of her hair, as well as the flowing tresses, are often duplicated in the painting from Santas Creus; and it is especially to be noted that her mantle assumes below precisely the undulating contours that we see, in this painting, upon the St. Ursula.

Cumulative proof assigns to the Rosary Master a panel in the Bertrán y Güell Collection, Barcelona, that represents the Virgin kneeling on the clouds and engaged in supplication of the Trinity for a family below on the earth, a husband, his wife, and a little boy, who holds a bird (Fig. 114). The child has the odd, Hogarth-like stare peculiar to the artist; the married couple are distinguished by the long necks of the canonized girls in the panel now at Tarragona; and the Virgin is scarcely differentiated from Mary in the Pedralbes Annunciation.

A very characteristic achievement of the Master has strayed as far as the Museum of Budapest, a panel of an enthroned episcopal saint, not identifiable by any special emblem, a work that must have been once the central piece of a retable (Fig. 115).[25] The bishop's head is no more than a masculine translation of that of the Virgin in the picture which gives the Master his name, whether we look at the almost pathologically glancing eyes, their thin brows, the outstretched neck, or even the actual lineaments of the countenance. The painter's taste for the sumptuous is illustrated by the gorgeous throne, very like the one upon which the Virgin sits, and by the extraordinarily rich vestments and canopy, elements of the kind that we have stressed in describing the panel from Santas Creus.

5. The Master of the Four Saints

In the ticklish business of distinguishing between a number of closely affiliated Catalan painters of the early Renaissance, it is possible to isolate an anonymous personality for whom, since we do not know with surety the provenience of any of his works, I have had to struggle to invent even so ill-defining a sobriquet as the Master of the Four Saints, derived from the subjects of one of his productions in the Museum of Vich. It turns out, however, that the pseudonym is not entirely inept, because, curiously enough, four sacred personages constitute what we have left of another work of his. Like

---

[25] The dimensions are 126 centimetres in height by 86 in width.

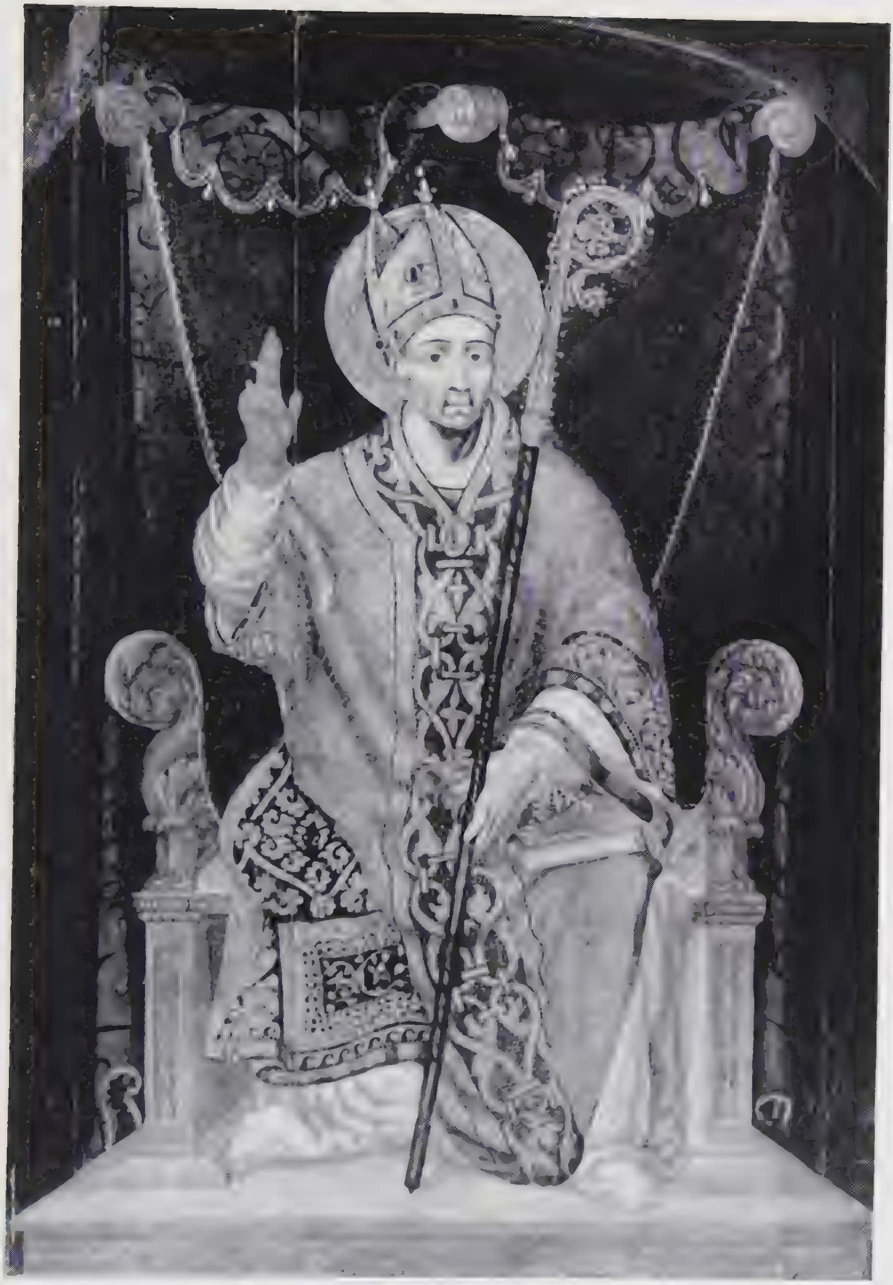

Fig. 115. THE ROSARY MASTER. EPISCOPAL SAINT. MUSEUM, BUDAPEST

several painters for whom we have been obliged to fashion titles, he was probably one of the many Catalan artists mentioned in the records of the times who are identified for us neither by any preserved, documented achievement nor by signature.

The production at Vich constituted evidently two lateral sections of a retable, the rest of which has been lost, and, belonging to the Museum from the time of its foundation, they are of unascertained origin in distinction from the majority of its possessions (Fig. 116).[26] Of the four standing saints, the pair at the left are: a lay woman, without emblems to allow us to recognize her, in front of a parapet above which rises a vista; and, beneath, St. Sebastian against an extensive landscape. The two correspondingly placed saints in the right section, before settings similar to those of their pendants, are Clement, with the emblem of the anchor, and Roch between his frequent companions, the angel and the dog, so that the great protectors against the plague, Roch and Sebastian, balanced each other. The gentle style, edging upon mannerism, is a competent but not thrilling aspect of the modes manipulated by several Catalans of the period, such as Jaime Forner, the Lladó Master, and the Scala Salutis Master, but yet sufficiently individualized to reveal a separate personality. The artist whom the painter most recalls in types is perhaps Pedro Gascó.

Further characteristics are brought out by the second work attributable to him (Fig. 117), fragments of a predella in the Museo Diocesano, Barcelona, possibly, though far from surely, originally at the town of Santa Inés de Malanyanes, which has supplied the same Museum with a documented retable by Jaime Forner. The modernization of the haloes in a way by which the nuns of the convent of Pedralbes, Barcelona, seemed to have liked to bring their old paintings up to date and render them more patently objects of devotion may indicate that the predella was, at least passingly, in their possession. Here again are four saints, now represented in half length, the Madonna holding the Child, once more Sts. Roch and Sebastian, and a Dominican, probably St. Dominic himself. The signs that we are in the presence of the same Master as at Vich are manifold. The Sts. Roch and Sebastian hardly vary from their effigies in the Vich panels; St. Dominic looks out at us with the intense and somewhat watery glance of the St. Clement; and a little branch sprouts forth horizontally from the tree to which St. Sebastian is bound

---

[26] In the old Catalogue, nos. 893 and 894 on p. 131.

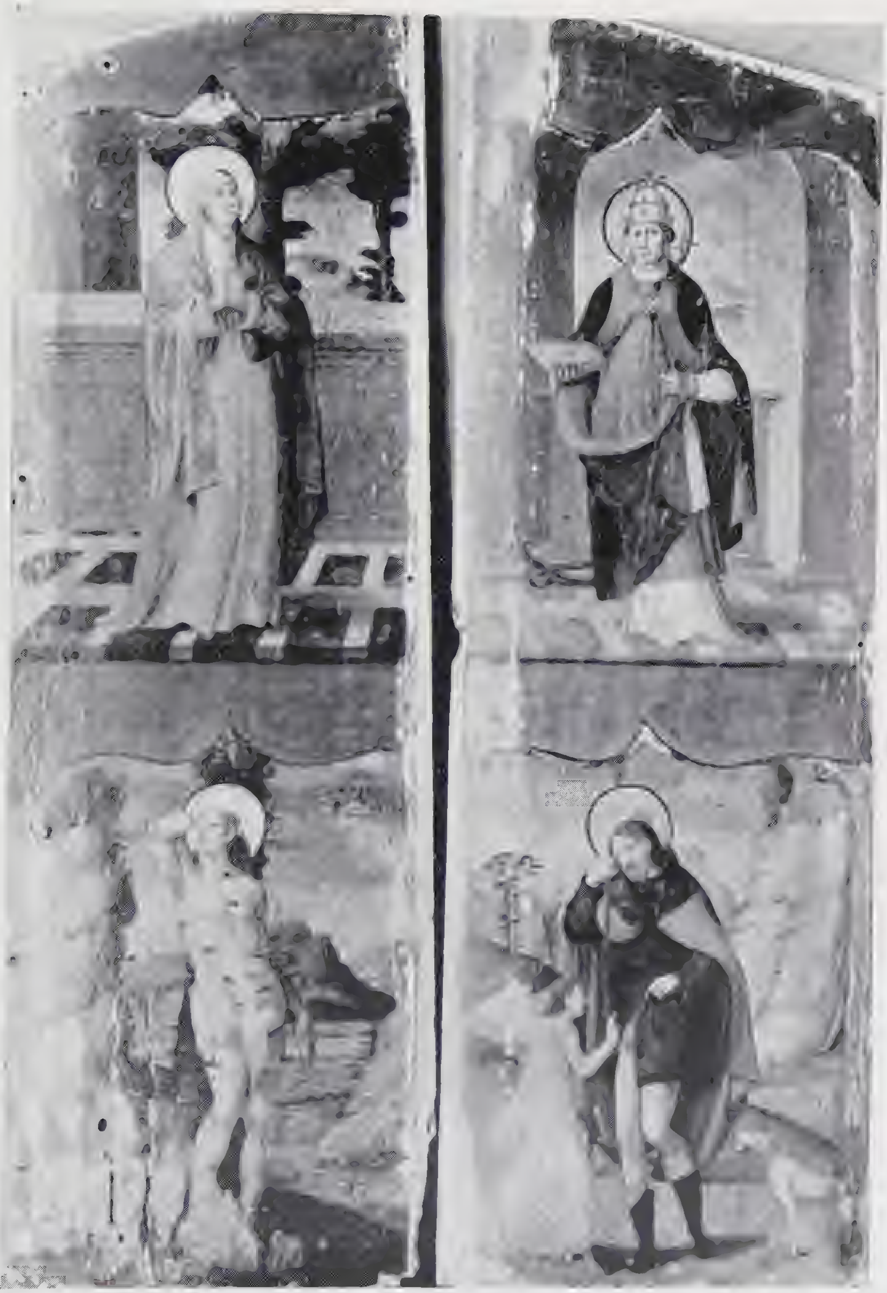

FIG. 116. THE MASTER OF THE FOUR SAINTS. FOUR SAINTS. FRAGMENT OF RETABLE. MUSEUM, VICH
(*Photo. Serra*)

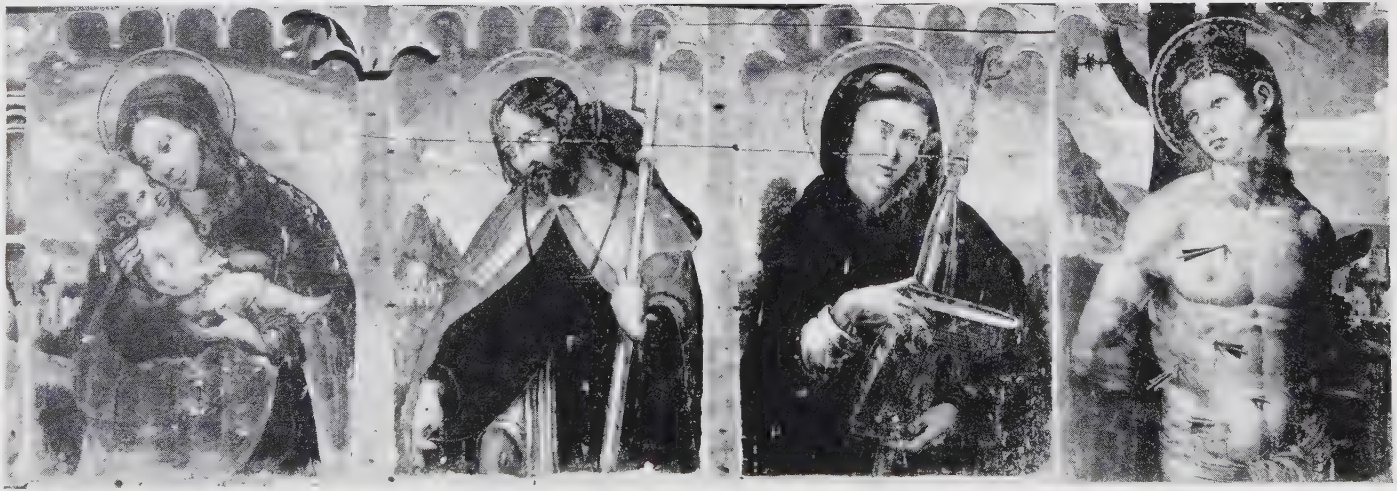

FIG. 117. THE MASTER OF THE FOUR SAINTS. FRAGMENTS OF A PREDELLA. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

exactly as from the trunks in the grove behind the unidentified, hallowed woman in the Vich assembly. The painter sets his sacred personages before more august landscapes than in his other production, wilder mountainous views, in two instances with a great crag jutting up at the left and with edifices, made eery by *sfumatezza*, aligned at its base, creating in this respect a resemblance to the background of the Deposition in the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, by the Master of the Scala Salutis,[27] who, however, appears to me another individual.

---

[27] See below, p. 313.

CHAPTER XII

PAINTERS AT GERONA BESIDES THOSE DISCUSSED IN SECTION I

1. The Lladó Master

In the artistic *milieu* of the province of Gerona, the painter whom I entitle from his retable once in the church of the monastery of Sta. María at Lladó, near Figueras, takes a humbler seat than the St. Felix Master or even the Catalan Monogrammist, and yet he has left us a rather pleasant heritage. The retable was thought to have been one of the casualties of the Spanish civil war, but, except for the predella, it proves to have been saved and is now in the Diocesan Museum, Gerona. Its principal dedication (Fig. 118) is to Sts. Cosmas and Damian, who are anomalously disposed in the structure: instead of balancing each other as usual, one of the two brothers occupies the central compartment, and the other is relegated to the slightly lower and narrower, lateral division at the left. When they are paired on an equality, it is customary to call the saint at the left Cosmas and his companion at the right Damian,[1] but the intent in the Lladó retable may have been to exalt Cosmas at the centre as the first named of the couple. The altarpiece was perhaps a supplicatory offering for escape from illness or a thanksgiving for recovery, since to the twin patrons of medicine there is added, in the right lateral compartment, the defender against the plague, St. Roch. The Crucifixion has its usual position above the principal compartment and is flanked by representations of St. Martin's charity to the beggar and of a scene in which a hermit, whom I cannot identify, encounters, while walking, three kneeling youths.[2] The sections of the predella, so far as preserved before the civil war, depicted the Pietà, St. Christopher carrying the Child, and the Magdalene and St. Lucy seated in landscapes. Over St. Roch's left shoulder there is visible the brim of his pendent hat ornamented with the impedimenta of a pilgrim, two pairs of staffs crossed to make X's, separated by a shell, and these

---

[1] Vol. XI, p. 201.

[2] I can see no reason for thinking that it is St. Anthony Abbot, nor is there any event in his life to which the scene corresponds.

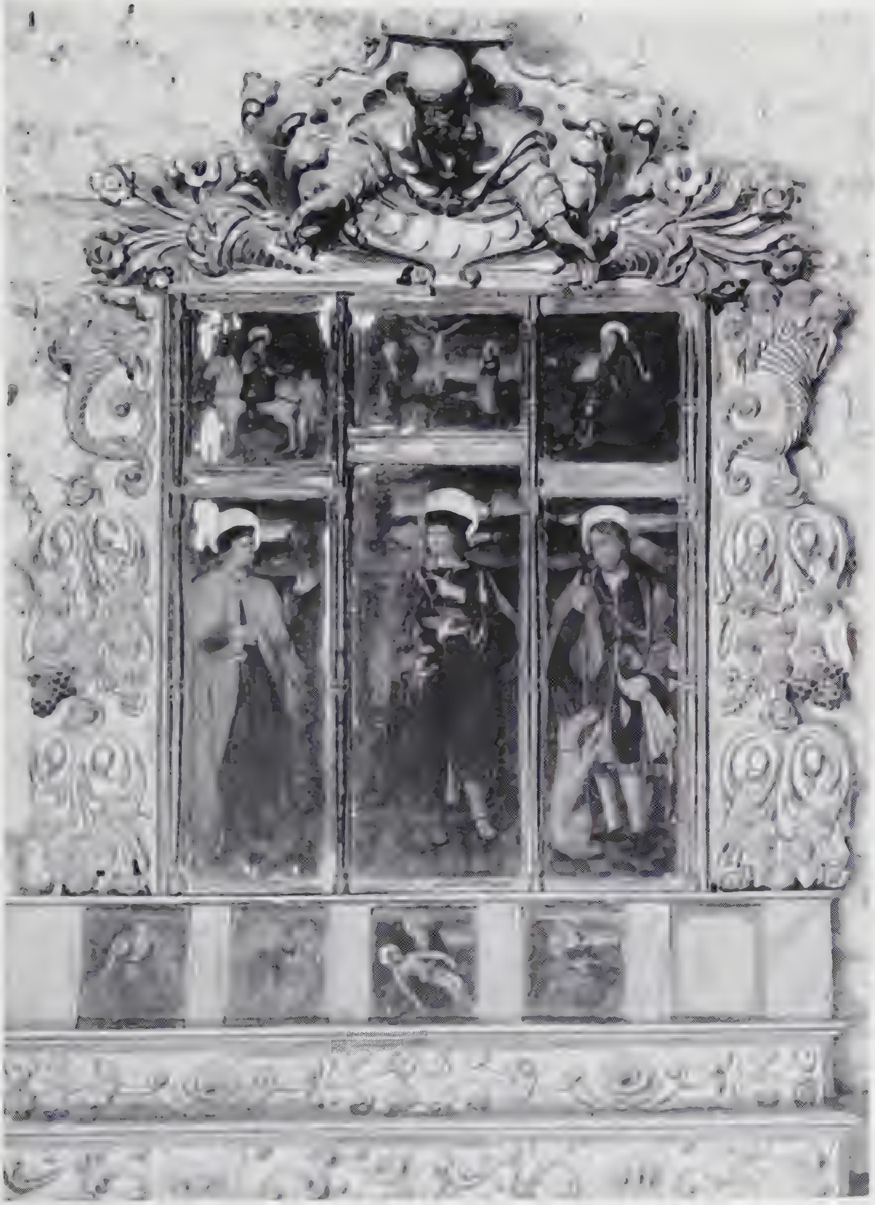

Fig. 118. THE LLADÓ MASTER. RETABLE FROM LLADÓ.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

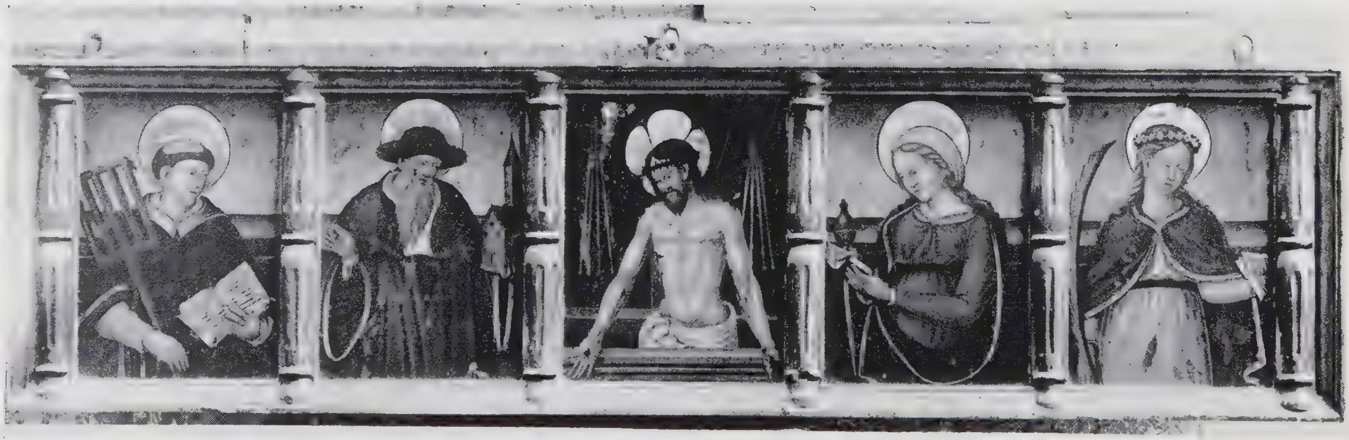

Fig. 119. THE LLADÓ MASTER. PREDELLA. S. FÉLIX, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

followed, after a pair of gourds, one above the other, by crossed keys (the significance of which for a palmer I do not understand), by an erect staff, and again by staffs crossed. The temptation to see a date in these objects, standing for the Roman numerals X and I, must be resisted, since the symbols are common in representations of pilgrims' garb at the time and since, in another retable by the Master, they are used in the same arrangement.

We find ourselves in the presence of a gentle and not incompetent painter, who reveals that he has passed into the beginning of the sixteenth century in little else than a more natural and less schematized conception of the human form in comparison with his predecessors of the end of the Quattrocento. The style is not highly individualized, and yet his retable in the church of Hospitalet will reveal to us interesting facets in his make-up that his other works would not have led us to suspect. One feels that he perhaps enjoyed contact with the Catalan Monogrammist or with the Gascó atelier, but he may quite well have evolved the style on his own initiative from the precedents of the late fifteenth century.

No one, I believe, could fail to discern the same hand in a lone predella in the church of S. Félix in the city of Gerona, containing at the centre the Christ of the Mass of St. Gregory and at the sides, in three-fourths length, Sts. Lawrence, Jerome, Mary Magdalene, and Cecilia[3] (Fig. 119). The general conformity with the methods of the Lladó Master is self-apparent, but the specific proof for the attribution is provided by the analogies of the Magdalene and St. Cecilia to the St. Roch in the retable that gives the artist his pseudonym. If the sex of the Magdalene were changed, she would look very like him, and this is, to a certain degree, because of the identity in the coiffure, which is peculiar to our Master. The tresses falling over the shoulders and the hair combed back in curls about the face are commonplaces in the pictures of the time, but above the curls he introduces, on either side of the part, a larger, rounding lock before the curls begin, a fashion discernible in no other Catalan painter who on any grounds, stylistic or objective, could be brought into consideration

---

[3] The defining emblem of the virgin martyr here represented is the crown of roses, which distinguishes also St. Dorothea, but I take the figure in the predella to be St. Cecilia because the dedication of a chapel to her in the cathedral of Gerona and the Catalan Monogrammist's retable at Molló show that she was popular in the province. St. Dorothea, however, was not without favor in Catalonia, in another province of which, Tarragona, the Master of Pedro de Cardona depicted her: see below, p. 330.

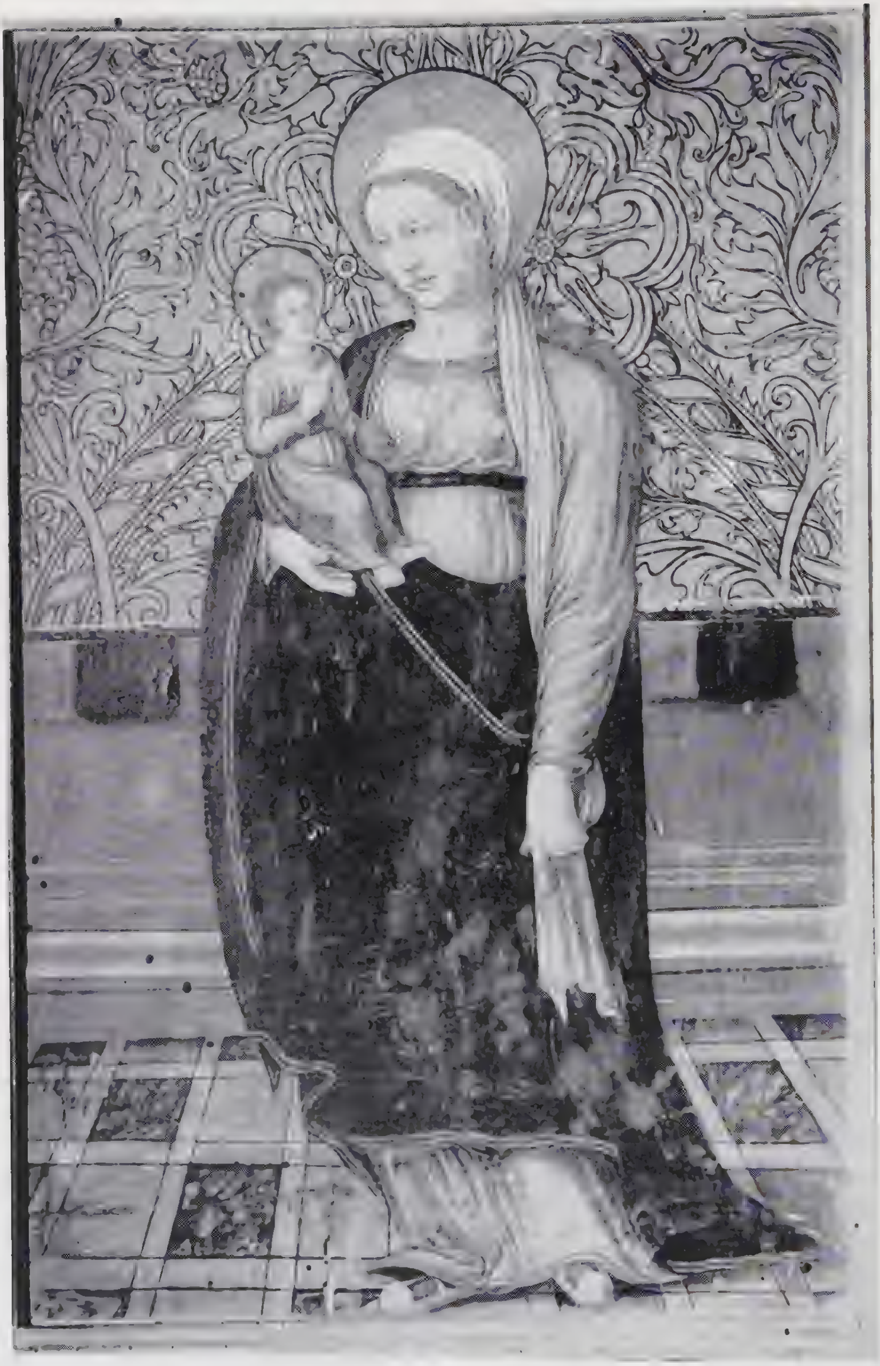

Fig. 120. THE LLADO MASTER. MADONNA. PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

for the authorship. St. Cecilia gives us a full frontal view of the same headdress. Minor correspondences can easily be detected — the predilection for rather broad shoulders, some affinity between the mild, youthful countenances of St. Lawrence and, at Lladó, of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the employment of a sharply triangular visage for the aged saint at the upper right in the Lladó retable and for the Christ of the Gerona predella, and the anatomical resemblances of this Christ and of the Saviour in the Lladó Pietà.

Another piece patently emanating from the same brush once constituted a part of a retable in the destroyed chapel of the Salas Consistoriales in the Ayuntamiento of Gerona and is now in the Provincial Museum of the city, a Madonna holding the Child and standing in front of a parapet, which is relieved against one of the old, conventional backgrounds of a brilliant brocade (Fig. 120).[4] The analogy in the head to the Magdalene of the predella would possibly in itself suffice to establish the work in the Lladó Master's canon, but it is once more the coiffure that furnishes the ultimate confirmation. The turban-like wimple is, of course, not rare in Catalan art of the Renaissance, and the real clue to the panel's creator is the distinctive curving lock on the brow. It should be remarked also that the design in the pavement is virtually unchanged beneath the principal saints in the Lladó retable and that in all three works which we have ascribed to the Lladó Master the haloes are alike in character. We have not so far discovered in him any marked gifts of originality, but he has arranged with pretty ingenuity the long fold that falls from the turban of the Madonna in the Museum and is caught far below by her left hand.

A number of factors combine to suggest strongly that he was the author of a work that from the Valls Collection, Gerona, has entered the Diocesan Museum of the town, displaying the upper half of a young standing masculine saint, the lower part of whose body has been truncated through the loss of the panel's bottom (Fig. 121).[5] Since the mutilation of the picture has destroyed all but the beginning of the emblem held by the saint, it is impossible to identify him (Ferreolus?).[6] The telltale treatment of the hair is not present, but it is parted in the Master's way and falls in the curves that he

---

[4] The dimensions are 78 centimetres in height by 50 in width.

[5] The panel's dimensions are .560 metres in height by .300 in width.

[6] See above, p. 148.

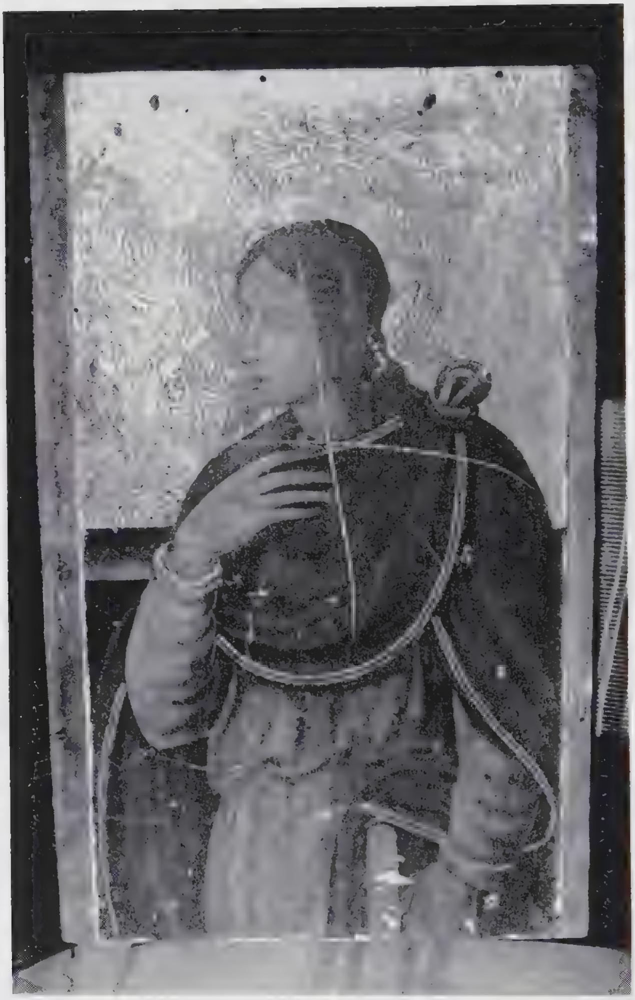

FIG. 121. THE LLADÓ MASTER (?). YOUNG MALE SAINT. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, GERONA
(*Photo. Sutrá*)

favors; and the countenance has the gentle look of the Lladó St. Roch. The youth's mantle is edged with the twin gold lines used for the costumes in the predella in S. Félix, and the nature of the brocaded background behind him corresponds exactly with that of the Madonna in the Provincial Museum.

After much pondering of the problem, I finally retain no misgivings in ascribing to the Lladó Master the panels of a retable of St. Roch in the parish church of Hospitalet de Llobregat, a suburb of Barcelona, paintings almost miraculously preserved, together with many others of the later sixteenth century in the edifice, when the building was burned in 1936. Additional interests attach to the retable as extending the field of the artist's vogue, like that of Joan de Burgunya, from Gerona to Barcelona, as probably embodying a more mature moment in his development when he had begun to turn to the modes of the High Renaissance, as certainly revealing broader capabilities than we should have guessed from his other recognized achievements, and, iconographically, as including rarely represented scenes from the life of the saint, a fitting patron for a town called Hospitalet, which keeps his day, August 16, as one of its two great *fiestas*. The four scenes are his birth, featured because he was the reward of prayers of his barren parents, his distribution of his father's wealth to the indigent and afflicted, one of his many ministrations to the plague-stricken (Fig. 122), and his death in prison where he had been wrongly incarcerated as a spy and where his jailer beholds him, as he departs this life, enjoying the service of angels. The remains of the altarpiece comprise also the full-length figures of two other pilgrims, Sts. James Major and Christopher (who are commemorated on a single day, July 25), and, I am strongly disposed to believe, a pinnacle of the blessing Eternal Father.

The general accordance with the Lladó Master's manner is obvious, and there are too numerous detailed analogies to his other works not to make the attribution mandatory. The most significant of these details occurs in a subordinate object, the hat of St. Roch strung over his shoulder in the scene of his care for the victims of the pest. The decoration of pilgrims' costumes with tokens of their pursuits is frequent enough in the paintings of the period, but here the crossed and the single upright staffs assume exactly the design seen at the right end of the symbols on the hat of St. Roch in the retable from Lladó, X I X I X. The saint in the Hospitalet series is conceived as a some-

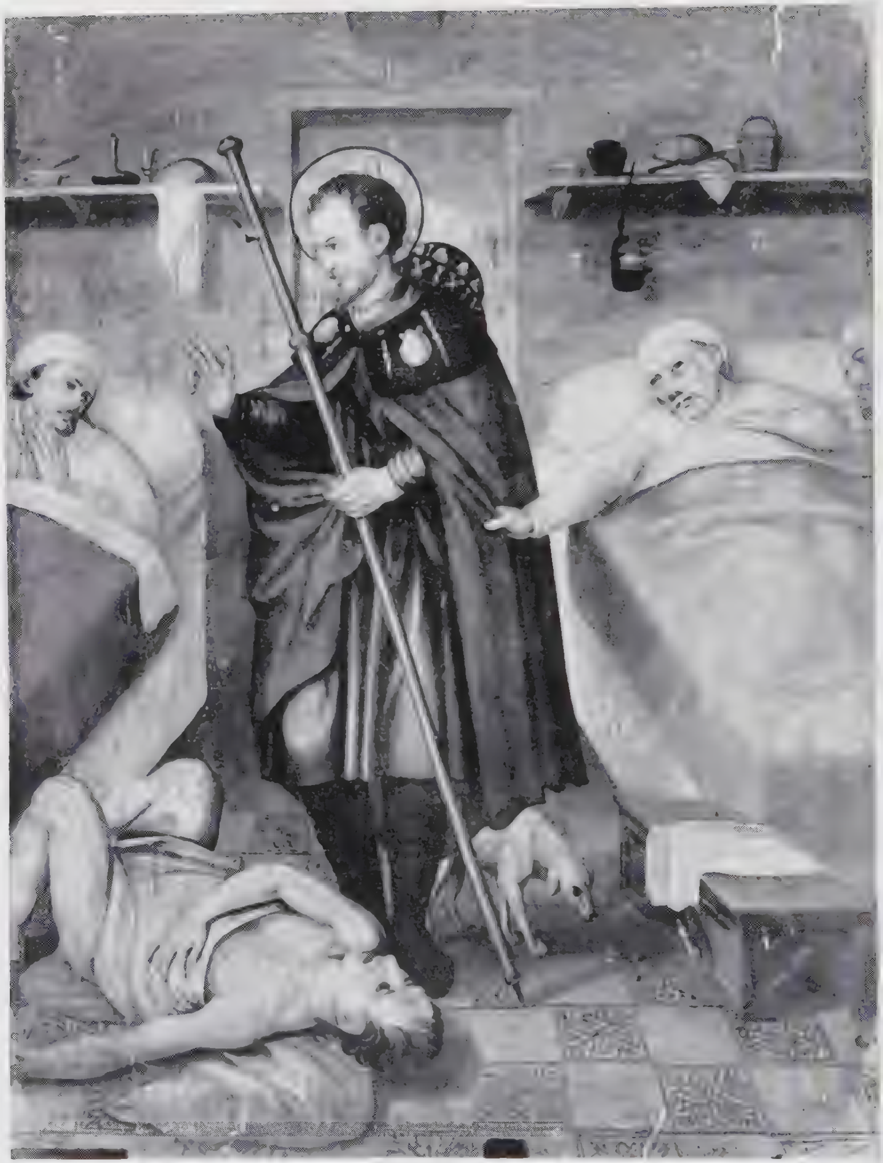

Fig. 122. THE LLADÓ MASTER. ST. ROCH MINISTERING TO THE PLAGUE-STRICKEN, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT

(*Photo. Mas*)

what different specimen of manhood from the Lladó effigy, one of the things that shows the greater breadth of scope which the series demonstrates, but Roch's almost inseparable companion, the dog, is the same animal in both aggregations. The nearest to an absolute repetition of type is provided by the girl who hands the mother refreshment in the panel of the birth and who is scarcely differentiated from the Magdalene in the predella in S. Félix, Gerona, even having dressed her hair in the distinctive fashion that the Master likes to impose upon his women. The representations of St. Christopher at the period resemble one another, but the compositional likeness of the hallowed giant at Hospitalet is so very close to the treatment in the Lladó predella as to possess a special significance. The landscapes in both retables correspond sufficiently, and the haloes, with a very dark edge, similar to those of the Catalan Monogrammist, are of the kind that the Lladó Master regularly employed.

We must not be too ready to assign the Hospitalet panels to a somewhat later date than the Master's works in the province of Gerona, since the very retable at Lladó contains forms already edging upon the fuller conception of human beings that prevailed in the first half of the Cinquecento, for instance the beggar with St. Martin and the Magdalene and St. Lucy of the predella, who wear the enlarged upper sleeves of female costume in the sixteenth century and therefore resemble the woman warming a cloth in the birth of St. Roch and the angel at the right in the scene of his death. There is, indeed, a certain dualism in the painter, who, in a single production, wavers between strong reminiscences of the style of the Quattrocento and the manner of the Renaissance. He surprises us at Hospitalet with qualities besides those contained in the rest of his known output. So, unexpected touches of invention appear, as when, in the compartment of St. Roch's care of the sufferers from the plague, in addition to the bedridden there is sprawled on the floor in the foreground a victim in the convulsions of the dread disease, or as when, at Roch's death, though the old *motif* of the ascent of his soul in a long, glistering spectre is retained, the Lladó Master has emphasized his imprisoned distress by depicting his feet clamped in the stocks. Most amazing of all in the artist is the keen concern with still life in the numerous objects set on shelves in the contagious hospital and so lovingly and skilfully rendered as to anticipate the great attainments of future centuries in

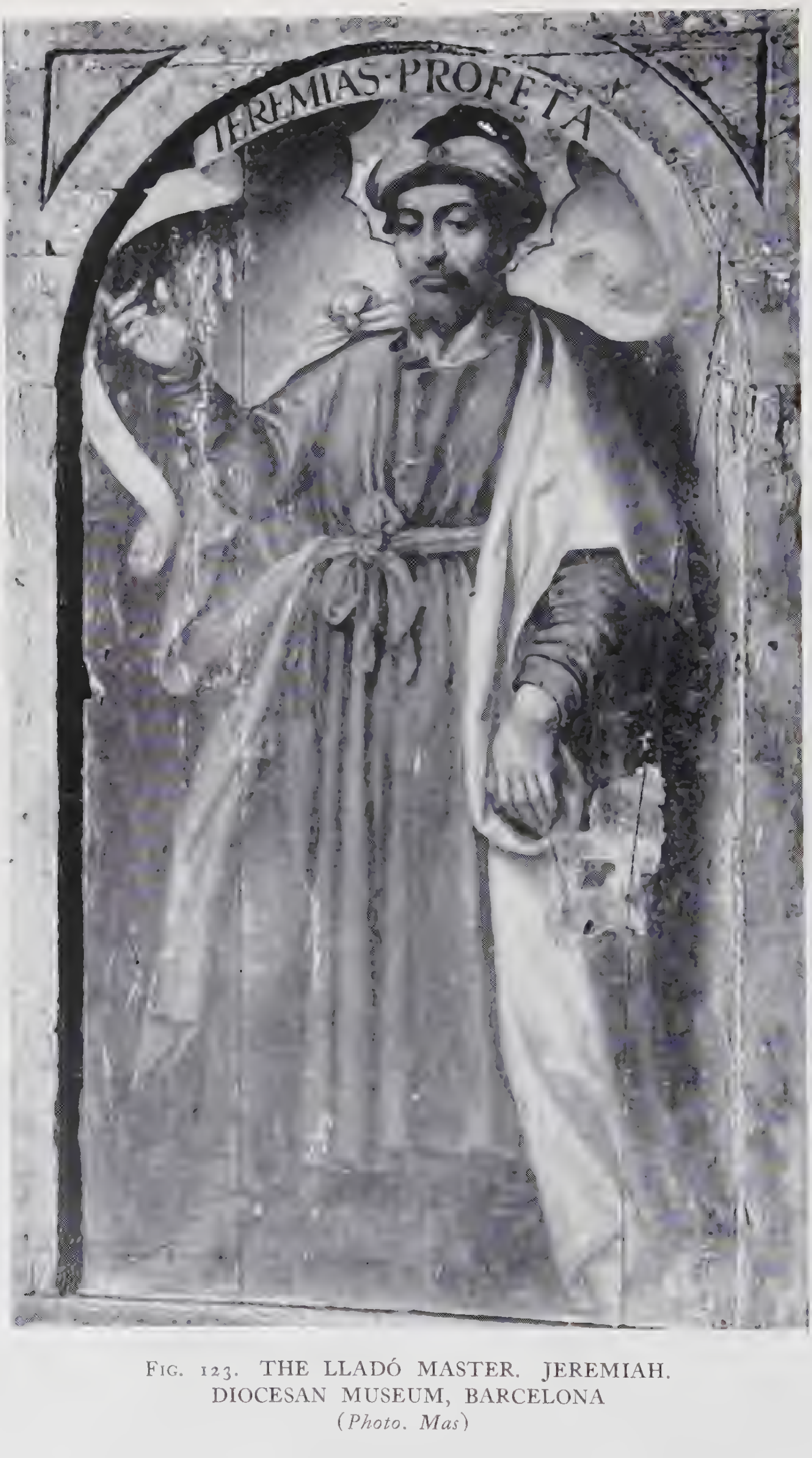
IEREMIAS·PROFETA

Fig. 123. THE LLADÓ MASTER. JEREMIAH.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

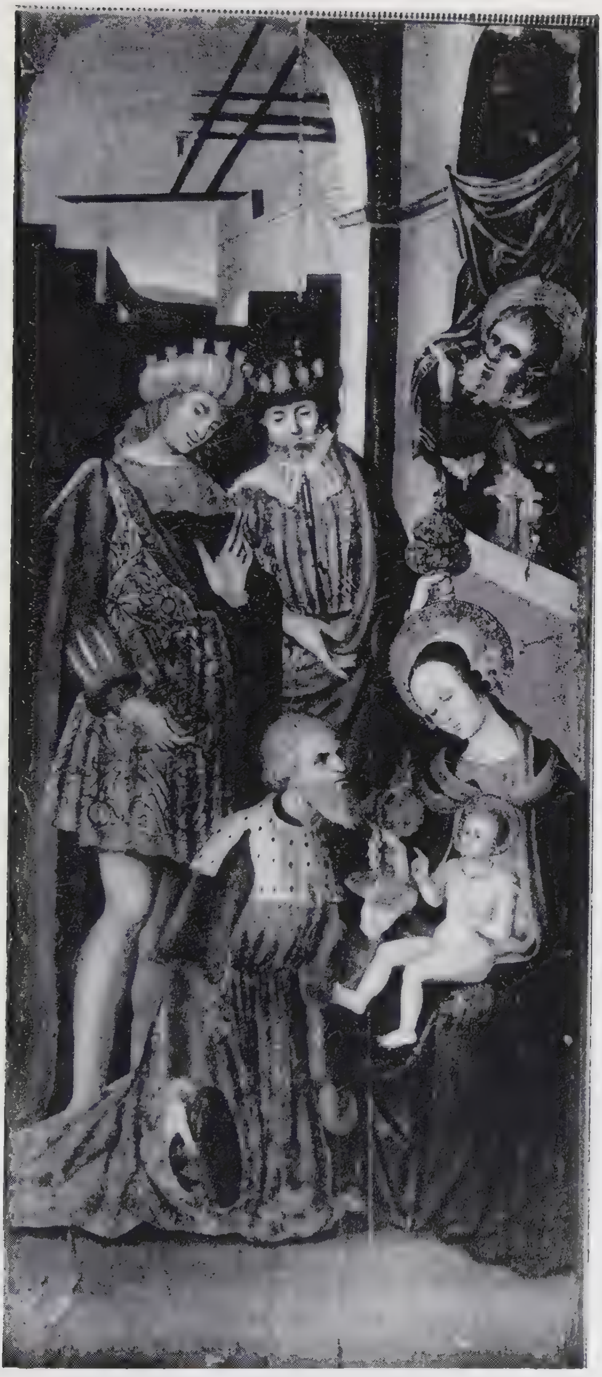

Fig. 124. THE LLADÓ MASTER (?). EPIPHANY, CENTRE OF TRIPTYCH. DUPONT COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

this aspect of the pictorial profession. Ainaud [7] perceives in the retable an influence of the St. Felix Master, which to my eyes would be of the vaguest sort.

It seems hard to doubt that the Lladó Master painted, quite credibly as another section of the retable of St. Roch, a panel of Jeremiah that, from Hospitalet, has entered the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona (Fig. 123). The intimate agreement with his style is obvious, and for a specific facial analogy one should look at the Eternal Father from the retable's apex. The gesture and fingers of the Prophet find a significantly close counterpart in the First Person of the Trinity and exemplify the Master's great interest in the employment of the hands for expression. Jeremiah's lowered left hand, grasping the drapery, is paralleled in the St. Roch in the retable from Lladó. The halo, here of the polygonal shape used for worthies of the Old Testament, accords, in its black-bordered gold, with those of the altarpiece of St. Roch and with the artist's ordinary practice.

I continue to entertain the possibility that the Lladó Master, at some time prior to his employment at Hospitalet, executed a triptych which I examined in the Dupont Collection, Barcelona, as long ago as 1932 and which would have the importance of tying his production, as might have been anticipated from the chief seat of his patronage, Gerona, to the contemporary output of Roussillon (Fig. 124). Arranged now as a triptych but perhaps originally sections of a large retable containing other, lost parts, the panels consist of the Epiphany at the centre and of standing figures of the Magdalene and an unidentified feminine saint at right and left. The general "feel" of the picture at once transmits to us the effect of having to do with the same painter who has been engaging our attention in the antecedent paragraphs, but there are many specific resemblances. The younger of the two standing Magi in features (though without a beard), in downward glance, and in characteristic suavity recalls insistently the St. Roch of the Lladó retable; and the enigmatical canonized woman exhibits similar lineaments of the face, as well as bend of the lowered head. Despite the fact that again the Master's peculiar arrangement of the upper section of the hair is nowhere visible, the kneeling King and the St. Joseph possess exactly the narrow tresses of the St. Damian in the retable from which the painter takes his title. The aged, unnamable saint in this retable and the Christ of the predella in S. Félix, Gerona,

---

[7] Unpublished article.

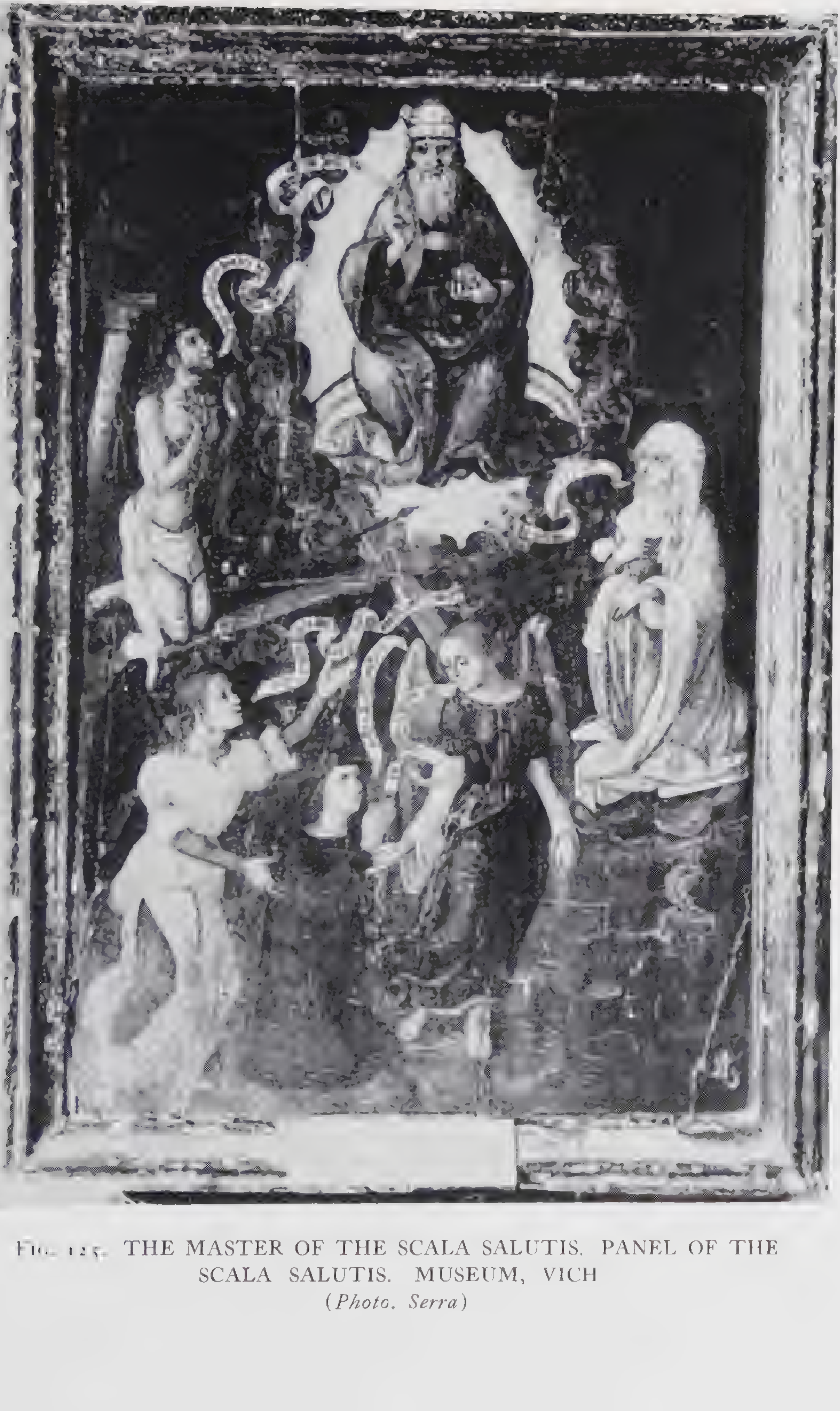

FIG. 125. THE MASTER OF THE SCALA SALUTIS. PANEL OF THE SCALA SALUTIS. MUSEUM, VICH
(Photo. Serra)

are distinguished by pointed beards such as the specimen that the kneeling King wears. The types of the Virgin and Magdalene are not repeated in the other works that we have brought into connection with the Lladó Master; but we are not justified in confining an artist to a single conception of the fair sex, and the Magdalene's hair straggles down upon her shoulders in the mode of the hallowed youth whose representation from the Valls Collection has entered the Diocesan Museum, Gerona. The Master's frequent stress upon the activity of the hands is outstandingly reiterated in the Epiphany. The Child is the same ungainly and elongated creature as the Infant held by the Madonna of the Provincial Museum, Gerona, and the lower drapery of this Madonna, with the shoes peeping forth beneath it, is practically repeated in the Magdalene, who stands upon pavement designed like that under the Lladó St. Roch. The link binding the Epiphany to the painting of Roussillon is found in the St. Joseph who raises a curtain from an aperture in the setting and gazes out precisely as he does in the version of the theme in the somewhat earlier retable of Notre Dame de la Magrana in the cathedral of Perpignan. I have sought in vain a joint source for this curious detail even in German prints, and the probability is that the Lladó Master derived it from his acquaintance with what at Perpignan must have been a preëminent pictorial monument.

2. The Master of the Scala Salutis

The personality for whose name, lacking knowledge that would afford a more definitive appellation, I am driven into the above circumlocution takes rank as a pleasantly endowed painter in technique as well as in feeling, and he gives the impression of belonging more or less to the circle of the St. Felix Master and the Catalan Monogrammist, perhaps to be considered, for a reason that will subsequently appear, to have labored like them for Gerona and its province. The title that I have chosen for him finds its reason in a panel of the Vich Museum[8] which comes from the extinct church of Sta. Clara in the town and in which Mossén Manuel Trens[9] has keenly perceived a crystallization of the religious concept, the Scala Salutis, man's approach to the Eternal Father through Christ on the top round of the imaginary ladder and to the Son through the Virgin on the next lower level (Fig. 125). At the bottom of the panel there kneels an erring youth, whom his Guardian Angel and St. Michael, holding the balances, direct to the mercies of Our Lady and the Godhead. Of the banderoles, inscribed in Latin, which accompany every person represented and some of which I cannot fully decipher, that of the youth is clear, "Monstra te esse matrem," a petition to the Virgin from the hymn, *Ave maris stella.* Trens finding that the picture is based specifically upon a sermon ascribed to St. Bernard, which I have failed to unearth, translates into Spanish the sentiment on the scroll of the Guardian Angel as, "Oh man, thou hast access to God assured since the Mother is before the Son and the Son before the Father"; but either through my lack of perception or because the Latin, as frequently happened, was subsequently partly erased or garbled, I myself can read only, "Accede, *peccator*, secure ad Deum (?) (then, words illegible to me) ante Filium et Filium ante Patrem." Again translating evidently from the sermon rather than from the banderole, Trens makes St. Michael invite the sinner to enter into the choir of the Lord's virgins, although all that I can decipher is the end of the inscription, "ingredere regnum Domini." The Virgin's scroll must refer to the offer of her merits for the youth's salvation, but I see plainly no more than the words, "hic merita." The utterances of the two persons of the Godhead obtrude no problems: the Son, kneeling on the Cross and surrounded by the symbols of the Passion, says, "Pater, ignosce huic quia pro eo passus sum"; and the Father answers, "Fiat tibi sicut vis."

---

[8] P. 124, no. 27, of the Catalogue of the Museum published in 1893.

[9] *María*, Madrid, 1947, pp. 373–375.

The unambitious but capably manipulated style transmits the effect of a blander form of the modes of the Master of St. Felix, without his violence or tendencies to mannerism, so that we must postulate that the author at least had come into contact with the aesthetic atmosphere of Gerona. He exhibits analogies to another member of the Gerona circle, the Catalan Monogrammist, but is more ethereal in feeling and creates more delicate, as well as more appealing, types of humanity. The similarities to the attainments of the artist active in Castile, Juan de Borgoña, are more tangible, but, as in the case of the St. Felix Master, they are in all probability fortuitous. It is not difficult to sense resemblances to the works of the Master's Valencian contemporary, the Cabanyes Master, but they are by no means such as to compel us to a belief that he was an immigrant from Valencia rather than a native Catalan.

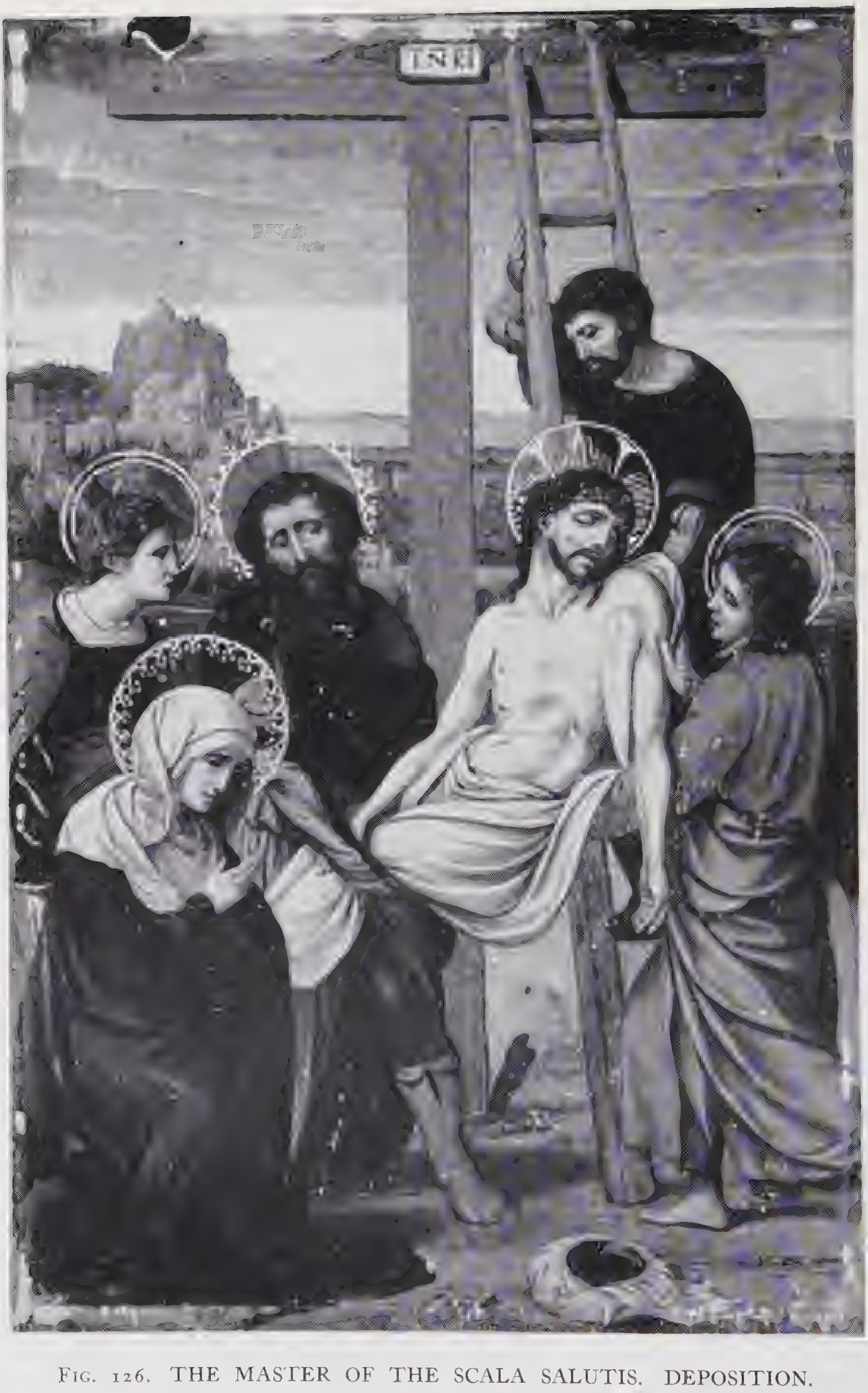

Fig. 126. THE MASTER OF THE SCALA SALUTIS. DEPOSITION. CONVENT, PEDRALBES, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

To him we can ascribe without reservations a Deposition (Fig. 126) built into a conglomerate retable which, like others in the convent of Pedralbes, Barcelona, the nuns constructed of paintings from various, now unknown, sources and by different authors and to which we have already alluded as comprising also a St. Sebastian by the Balaguer Master. For a time the retable was transferred to the Diocesan Museum, Barcelona, but has now been restored, I believe, to Pedralbes. The pious activity of the nuns extended to the modernization of the Virgin's halo and to supplying Nicodemus (holding Christ's legs) with one, whereas Joseph of Arimathaea (on the ladder) is destitute of any such distinction. Unmistakably the scene is pervaded by precisely the same sort of gentle serenity of spirit and even by the same, actual types as the panel of the Scala Salutis. In particular, the St. John at the right should be compared with the sinner as well as with the St. Michael, and the Magdalene at the left with the Guardian Angel. The painting adds to our knowledge of the Master by including a landscape of a kind which will help in attributing to him another work and which comprises eminences along whose sides climb picturesque mediaeval cities.

We must face at once the problems bearing some relation to the panel of the Deposition and raised by two further sections of the conglomerate retable into which it has been inserted. The relation of the predella to the Deposition is that, in my opinion, they both may possibly, though very far from certainly, have been executed by the same hand. Half-lengths of saints, labelled in the Catalan language, are the predella's themes, (reading from left to right) Eulalia, Honoratus, the Guardian Angel, Narcissus, and Catherine. The emblem of the Guardian Angel is unusual, a miniature church that he holds in his hand and blesses, but the reason is that an inscription identifies the church as Pedralbes, showing that the predella was done for the convent. It is the types of the Angel and the virgin martyrs that suggest as a conceivable candidate for the authorship the Master of the Scala Salutis, whose case would be strengthened by the consideration that the predella, although a commission for Pedralbes, is revealed by the presence of St. Narcissus and perhaps also of St. Honoratus to have had some sort of connection with Gerona. We already have seen [10] St. Narcissus to be a patron of the city, and, despite the fact that St. Honoratus was popular along the whole eastern coast of Spain and especially at Valencia, the cathedral of Gerona contained no less than two chapels dedicated to him.[11] As good or even a better case, however, could be put up, on the basis of the types, for another and greater painter active at Gerona, the St. Felix Master, and it is to be noted that in at least one instance, for the saints in the Carreras Collection, if they are really by him, he retained a gold background, although the curious dotted figuration of the gold in the predella of the conglomerate retable is very different in pattern. For this predella and, as a matter of fact, for the works that I ascribe to the Master of the Scala Salutis, I have not rejected, without much study, the candidacy of the late mediaeval painter, employed in the province of Gerona and at Perpignan, the Canapost Master.

---

[10] Vol. VI, p. 242.

I am even more at a loss to name the author of the retable's central compartment displaying the standing effigy of St. Augustine, with his regular emblem of a heart, a figure whom some lady, perhaps a devout nun of Pedralbes, has wished to pass off as St. Ignatius of Antioch, attaching the inscription, "O Ignaci (= Ignati), presul (= praesul) optime, ancillam tuam semper protege." Surely not even a devotee's religious ardor could have wished us to believe that this figure of a hallowed prelate was St. Ignatius de Loyola, and the great bishop of Antioch did not absolutely lack a cult in Spain.[12] It is not out of the question that the predella discussed in the last paragraph belonged to the retable from which the St. Augustine derives (whether or not the Deposition by the Master of the Scala Salutis has the same source), but I can discover no tangible way of determining between this Master or the Master of St. Felix or some other good Catalan painter of the time in the matter of attribution of the Father of the Church. The brocaded design in the gold background is similar to that of the two saints in the Carreras Collection probably by the St. Felix Master; but the effigy of St. Augustine has apparently been so far repainted that a valid judgment in regard to its original maker seems no longer feasible. Haloes patterned like that worn by the saint are sometimes used by Pedro Nunyes, Jaime Forner, and the Premiá Master, but there are really no other visible grounds for introducing these artists into the problem.

---

[11] Lamberto Font, *Gerona, La Catedral y el Museo Diocesano*, Gerona, 1952, pp. 24 and 26.

[12] See my vol. X, p. 279.

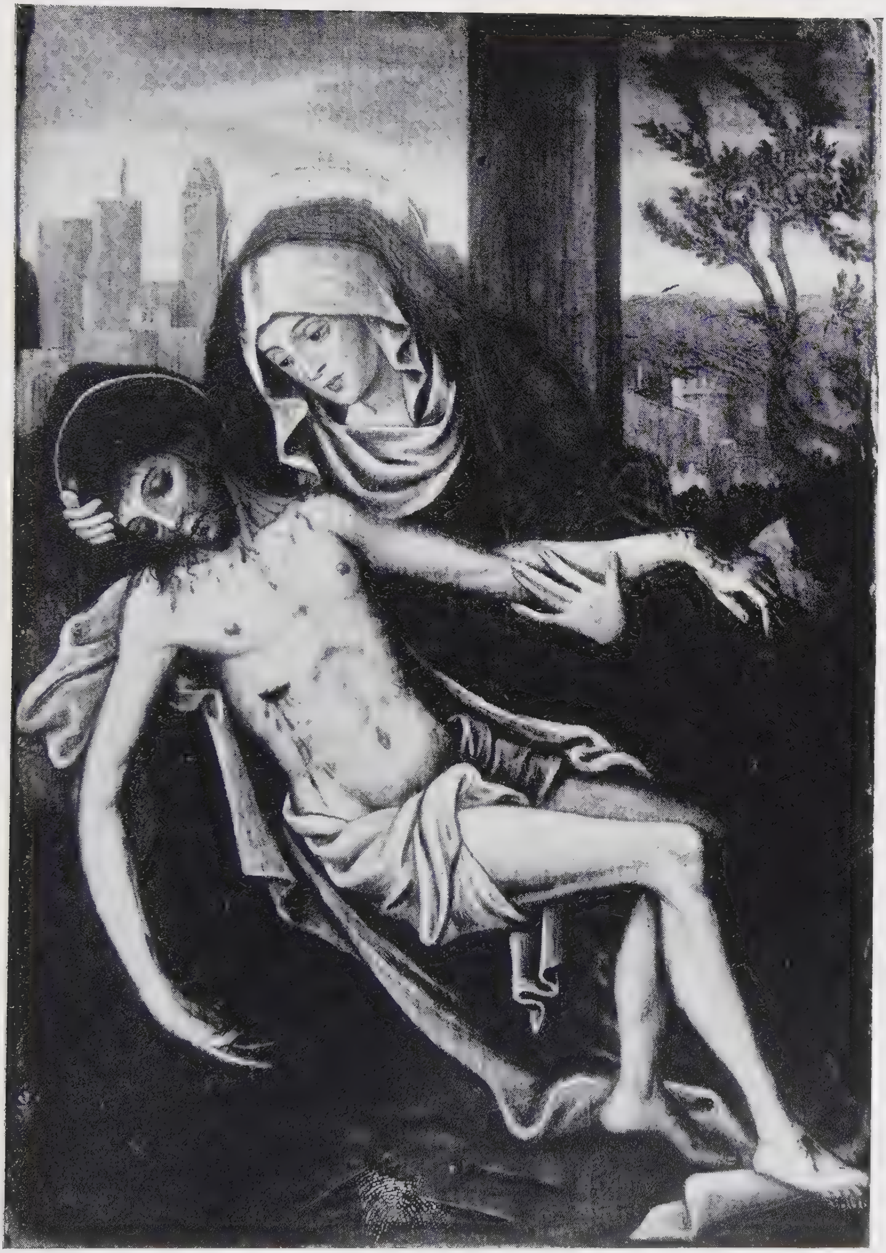

FIG. 127. MASTER OF THE SCALA SALUTIS (?). PIETÀ. GRASES COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

We practically emerge from the shadows of doubt in assigning to the Master of the Scala Salutis a Pietà in the Grases Collection at Sarriá, the suburb of Barcelona (Fig. 127). Our Lord is virtually the same personage, in head and body, as the Saviour in the Vich panel; he is only less similar to the Christ of the Pedralbes Deposition; the Virgin is reconcilable with the Master's execution; and the landscape once more exhibits his romantic walls and towers, as if here constituting a view of San Gimignano!

CHAPTER XIII

TARRAGONA

1. Jaime Segarra

Still archaic in his modes but a competent performer with a genial attitude towards life, Segarra has been revealed to us as an artistic personality by the documentation of a preserved work, the retable of the Nativity in the Museum of Reus. The revelation is the achievement of Don Salvador Vilaseca Anguera, who in an excellent monograph [1] on the artist and on his connection with the plague of 1530 has assembled the pertinent facts about him as well as the results of his own thorough research in the archives for documents bearing on the subjects of his book. A citizen of Reus in the province of Tarragona but patronized also at the city of Tarragona itself, he can be traced from 1501 to 1531, enjoying a considerable reputation which is witnessed by the goodly list of his recorded productions.

Of these, only one has come down to us, the retable that has eventually reached the Reus Museum from the spot for which it was done, the altar of the now destroyed chapel of Betlem, constructed in the town as a pious offering against the plague. On February 3, 1531, a year after the chapel's foundation, Segarra agreed to paint the retable, which in accordance with the chapel's name, the Catalan for Bethlehem, displays in its principal compartment the Nativity; and at the sides in smaller scale are four related themes, the Annunciation, Circumcision, Epiphany, and Flight into Egypt (Fig. 128), illustrating in the substitution of the Annunciation for the Resurrection one of the changes that frequently took place in the original programs of contracts for altarpieces. The assemblage comprises also another section demanded in the document, a pinnacle of the Trinity.

Just as the compositions are traditional, so Segarra evinces little consciousness of the developing Renaissance except in the more natural representation of the human form that occurred everywhere at the commencement of the sixteenth century and except in the abandonment of the old Catalan embossings. Now and then he punctuates the scenes with slight individual touches, for instance the curious rings

---

[1] *La pesta de l'any 1530 i el pintor Jaume Segarra de Reus*, Reus, 1952.

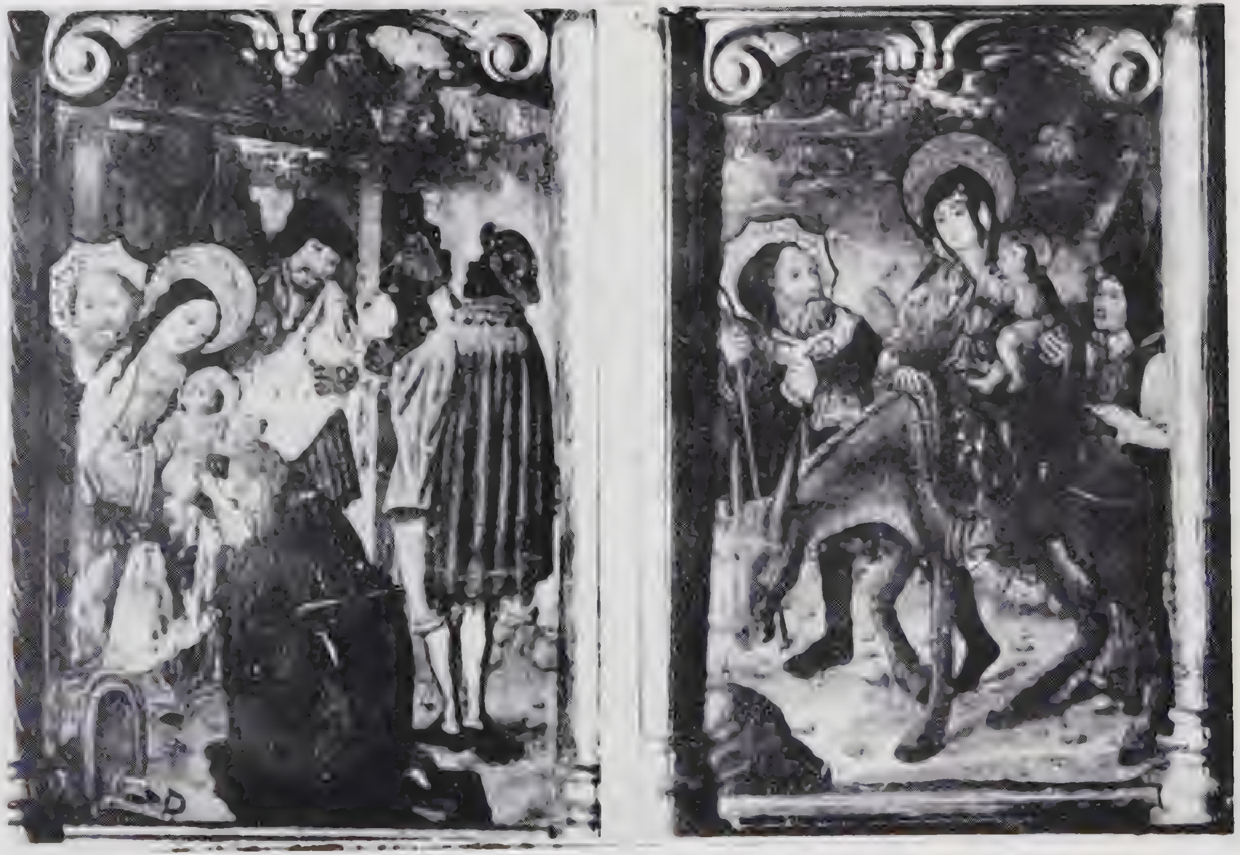

FIG. 115. JAIME SEGARRA. EPIPHANY AND FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, SECTION OF RETABLE
MUSEUM, REUS
(*From a book by Vilaseca Anguera*)

like hoops with which he encircles the groups of angels in the Nativity or the emphasis on human affection in the effective rendering not only of the tender humility of the aged Magus kissing the Infant's foot in the Epiphany but also of the Child's caress of His mother in the Flight into Egypt. Indeed one senses behind Segarra's comely, wholesome types of persons an artist of fine character with a love and appreciation of mankind.

2. The Master of Pedro de Cardona

Since Tarragona lies in the southern part of Catalonia, painting in the city and its province had from the first revealed contacts with the adjacent schools of the Maestrazgo and the old kingdom of Valencia, and the affiliation persists now at the beginning of the Renaissance. In the early fifteenth century we have observed a Valencian overtone in the retable from the monastery of Santas Creus which, once in the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona but now set up in a chapel of the cathedral, stands in some sort of relationship to the art of Luis Borrassá;[2] and the principal painter of the Maestrazgo in the middle of this century, Valentín Montolíu, long resided at Tarragona and has left us there one of his extant works.[3] The representative of the strain from Valencia at Tarragona in the first part of the sixteenth century was the agreeably talented painter to whom I give the name of the Master of Pedro de Cardona because the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona contains the pieces of two retables that he did for a pair of chapels built in the cathedral between 1520 and 1525 by this archbishop of the city;[4] and it can hardly be doubted that he was trained in the circle of the Valencian Martínez Master, most probably by the member of this circle whom we have christened the St. Lazarus Master. Angulo[5] identifies our painter with a Master Oliva recorded by document to have done a retable from Vallmoll now in the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona,[6] but on a subsequent page I shall

---

[2] See below, p. 563.

[3] Vol. VII, pp. 662 and 688.

[4] Sanç Capdevila, *La Seu de Tarragona*, supplement to *Analecta sacra tarraconensia* of 1934, p. 51.

[5] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 356, n. 3. Quite independently of each other, Angulo and I have isolated this phase of painting at Tarragona, but Angulo divides the examples somewhat differently between the Master of Pedro de Cardona and his following.

[6] In earlier volumes (especially X, p. 372) we have studied an Annunciation

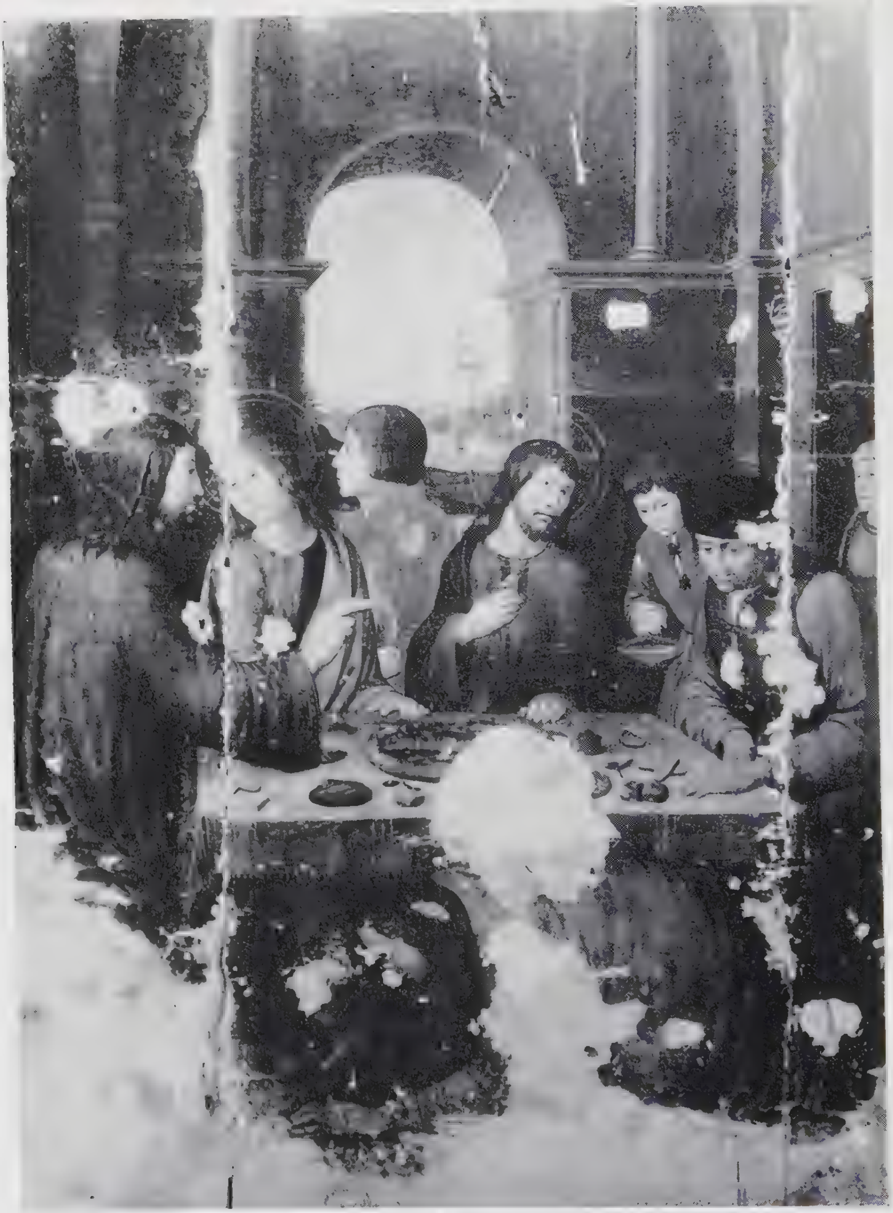

FIG. 129. THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA. THE MAGDALENE WASHING CHRIST'S FEET, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA

(*Photo. Mas*)

try to show that the Vallmoll artist is instead a different personality, a pupil of the Master of Pedro de Cardona. How soon after the commencement of the architecture of the chapels in 1520 and their completion in 1525 the two retables for the archbishop Pedro de Cardona were painted, there are no sure means of determining. Angulo inclines to a date in the vicinity of 1537, probably because on May 28 of this year the chapter of the cathedral granted to the prelate the relics necessary for the consecration of the pair of altars,[7] but the one of the two retables that honors the Magdalene must have been painted earlier than about 1536, the approximate date of an altarpiece by Master Oliva that imitates it.[8]

The retable from the archbishop's chapel of the Magdalene is indeed one of three from this period dedicated to her that curiously are preserved in the city.[9] Its extant parts comprise the following scenes: her washing of Christ's feet (Fig. 129); the *Noli me tangere*; the embarkation from Palestine for Marseilles in three episodes, at the front the Magdalene discussing the journey with her brother, Lazarus, in the background the saint with her companions already on the sea in the boat "without any tackle or rudder," and in the middle ground a Jewish potentate watching the departure while at his side one of his minions lays on the shore the oars removed from the vessel; the levitation of the Magdalene in the hands of angels; and her last communion. The pieces from Pedro de Cardona's other chapel, under the patronage of the Virgin Annunciate, are fragmentary sections of an Epiphany and an Ascension.

Here and there the style edges upon the achievements of the St. Lazarus Master so very closely that one might be forgiven for entertaining the idea of an actual attribution to him; but other passages are more difficult to harmonize with such an hypothesis, and the safer procedure is to ascribe the retable to an artist who had been intimately subjected to his influence. The compartment where the ties with the St. Lazarus Master are most tangible is the scene of the washing of Christ's feet. The eyes throughout the panel are rendered in precisely this Master's mode; the bearded Apostle at the right recalls the kneeling pilgrim beside the corpse in the principal panel of the altar-

---

from Vallmoll, also in the Tarragona Museum, that supplies a pseudonym for a late Gothic, Catalan painter.

[7] Sanç Capdevila, *op. cit.*, 53.

[8] See below, p. 335.

[9] See above, p. 100, and below, p. 335.

piece formerly in the Diocesan Museum, Valencia, that gives the St. Lazarus Master his name; [10] the serving boy just behind him at the left is like the acolyte of the same age in this panel; and, above all, the woman looking in through a door at the right is a virtual replica of the rich man's wife in the representation of the parable of Dives in the altarpiece's predella. But the analogies extend also to other sections of the retable of the Magdalene. In the last communion the clerics behind St. Maximin have the rigidity and dead stare of those at the right in the scene of interment in the altarpiece of the Diocesan Museum, Valencia. The Magdalene in the levitation is a conspicuous instance among many in the retable where the Tarragona painter has reproduced the smoothness and the hard contours of the St. Lazarus Master, and she arrestingly resembles the Virgin of this artist's panel of the Coronation in the Collection of Don Manuel González Martí.[11] The types of the angels supporting her seem to be derived from the St. Lazarus Master's conception of celestial spirits, as in the group of four panels in the Provincial Museum at Valencia.[12]

We happen to know of a painter recorded as active at Tarragona from 1496 to 1531, Juan Montolíu,[13] who, if he was really a son of Valentín Montolíu, would have begun his career in the general region of Valencia and might have abandoned the paternal manner for study under the St. Lazarus Master; but stylistically Juan still remains an unknown quantity, and no vestige of documentary proof justifies his equation with the Master of Pedro de Cardona.

We cannot refuse to our Master the remains of a retable that is now in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, but must once have decorated the chapel in the cathedral which, originally under the patronage of St. John Evangelist, was rededicated in 1500 to St. Thecla and is at present devoted to St. Oldegar.[14] The records indicate, unfortunately without giving us the names of either the carver or the painter, that the wooden frame (and perhaps also sculpture) of a retable for this chapel had been made by July 4, 1524, and that the paintings were

---

[10] Vol. VI, p. 388. The altarpiece was destroyed in the civil war.

[11] Vol. VIII, fig. 344.

[12] Vol. VI, fig. 163.

[13] Vol. VII, pp. 662–663. The date 1496 is that of a contract of Juan Montolíu, then temporarily residing at Barcelona, to execute a retable in collaboration with the Majorcan painter, Guillem Mesquira: see J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, II, 3 (1944), 47.

[14] Sanç Capdevila, *op. cit.*, 39–40 and 53–54. The present chapel of St. Thecla is a sumptuous affair of the eighteenth century.

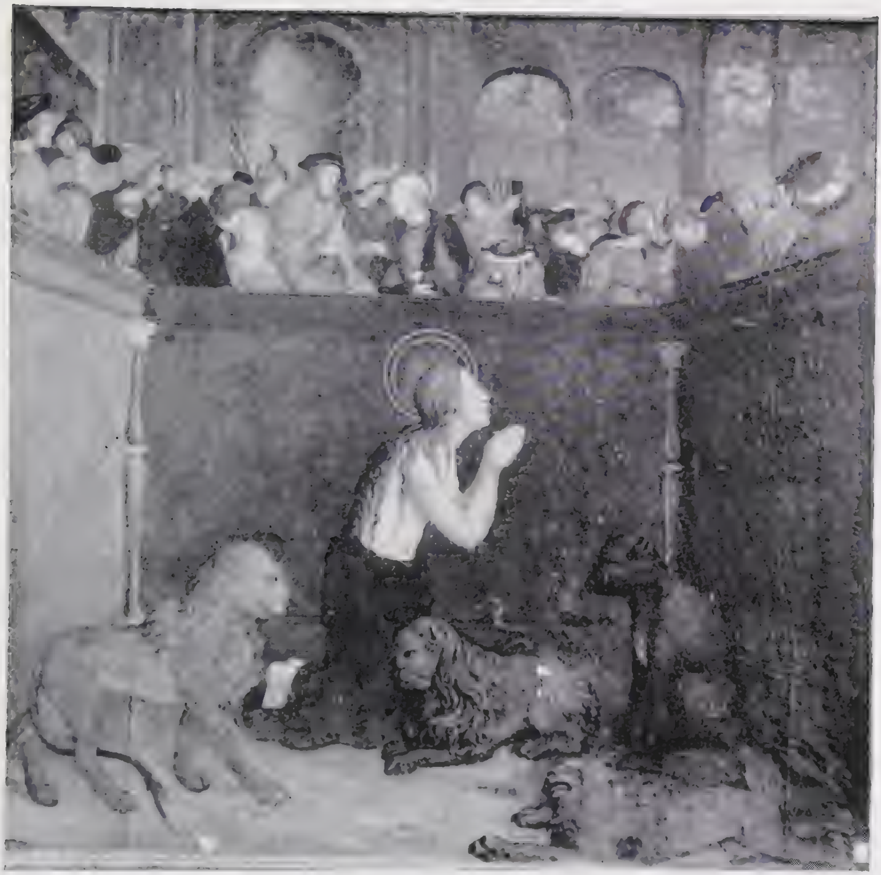

FIG. 130. THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA. ST. THECLA IN THE AMPHITHEATRE, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

probably executed within the three years which elapsed before June 4, 1527.[15] St. John, by reason of the earlier name of the chapel, must have been honored in the retable together with St. Thecla, since the remains include one scene from his life and three from that of the virgin martyr. In the compartment surviving from the section commemorating St. John, the subject is his boiling in oil.[16] The first of the other compartments depicts St. Paul preaching at Iconium, while at the upper left the suitor and mother of St. Thecla vainly seek to make her cease the vigil of three days and nights at the window during which she listened to the Apostle's sermons; and the second panel is assigned to the refusal of the wild beasts to attack her in the amphitheatre (Fig. 130). In the background of the third compartment we see her disappearing into the rock from which she never again was to emerge to be seen by man and thus eluding the ruffians who had been sent to molest her eremitic old age; but the foreground is taken up with the scene of a bishop receiving from the rock her arm, the precious relic belonging to the cathedral of Tarragona which James II of Aragon in the fourteenth century is said to have obtained from the King of Armenia.[17]

The most inescapable proof of the attribution is the actual repetition of the Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere* in the St. Thecla among the beasts; but almost as determinative is the fact that the Master's preferred type for youths, as in the serving boy and another lad at the centre in the representation of the washing of Christ's feet, emerges several times among the thronging spectators of St. Thecla's experience in the amphitheatre, particularly in a gallant at the left who, in accordance with an addiction to *genre* not infrequent in the Master of Pedro de Cardona, punctuates the crowd and graphically illustrates his indifference to the saint's ordeal by a flirtation with a maiden in the front row of the balcony. The prominent, portly listener to St. Paul's exhortations should be compared with the Lazarus in the scene of the Magdalene's embarkation, and the dimming effect of aërial perspective is managed in much the same way on the more distant members of the Apostle's congregation and on the sacred personages who have already embarked for Marseilles. St. Thecla leaning in ecstasy from the window to catch St. Paul's every word recalls in type the angels in the Magdalene's last communion. The group of clerics behind St. Maximin in the last communion exhibit a general resemblance to the line of canons in the suite of the bishop taking St. Thecla's arm from the rock, and this resemblance reaches the point of the specific in the treatment of the hair. The head of St. John in the one extant panel devoted to him scarcely differs from the youthful Apostle at the back in the fragment of the Ascension from the retable of the chapel of the Virgin Annunciate. The edifices of the street where St. Paul preaches and the amphitheatre into which St. Thecla is cast exhibit a keen interest in architectural design and invention.

---

[15] *Ibid.*, 54.

[16] I am at a loss to explain the figure of a praying cleric seen in the landscape through the doorway of the hall of St. John's ordeal and scarcely looking like a portrait of a donor.

[17] See A. V. Domenec, *Historia general de los santos y varones ilustres en santidad del principado de Cataluña*, Gerona, 1630, pp. 104–109. The picture explains a detail that puzzled me in volume VII (p. 462), the piece of rock combined with an arm as an attribute for effigies of St. Thecla. The subject of the arm and the cliff is specifically demanded for one of the compartments in the contract for Credensa's retable at Sitges: see above, p. 163.

The collocation of the panels of Sts. Thecla and John under the name of the Master of Pedro de Cardona almost certainly carries with it the assignment to him of six compartments of a retable of St. Blaise that from the Ermita de S. Blas at Aleixar [18] have been imported into the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona. In the first compartment, St. Blaise blesses the birds and beasts that had fed him in the wilds, and next he enjoys a vision of Christ directing that he leave his retreat according to the desire of the pagan governor of Sebaste. The third panel displays a scene that I cannot interpret otherwise than his cure of the child with a fishbone in the throat, who here anomalously is a maiden rather than, according to the usual version, a boy. The bone seems to be definitely represented as externalized on the outside of her neck, so that the subject can scarcely be St. Blaise's benediction of the woman who had brought him the pork in prison. The three last compartments incorporate stages in his martyrdom, the beating with staves (Fig. 131), the rending of his body with combs of iron, and his ultimate decollation in a room in which there already lie slain upon the pavement the two gory infants who had asked to die with their

---

[18] Also written La Lleixá. Angulo (*op. cit.*) places the retable of St. Blaise in the following of the painter whom I call the Master of Pedro de Cardona. I well realize the analogies to this painter's pupil, Master Oliva (see below, p. 332), and an occasional lapse in the panels from the technical standards of the Master of Pedro de Cardona; but they seem to me on the whole to accord rather with the types and methods of the Master of Pedro de Cardona, who, however, may have been assisted here by Oliva or some other member of the shop.

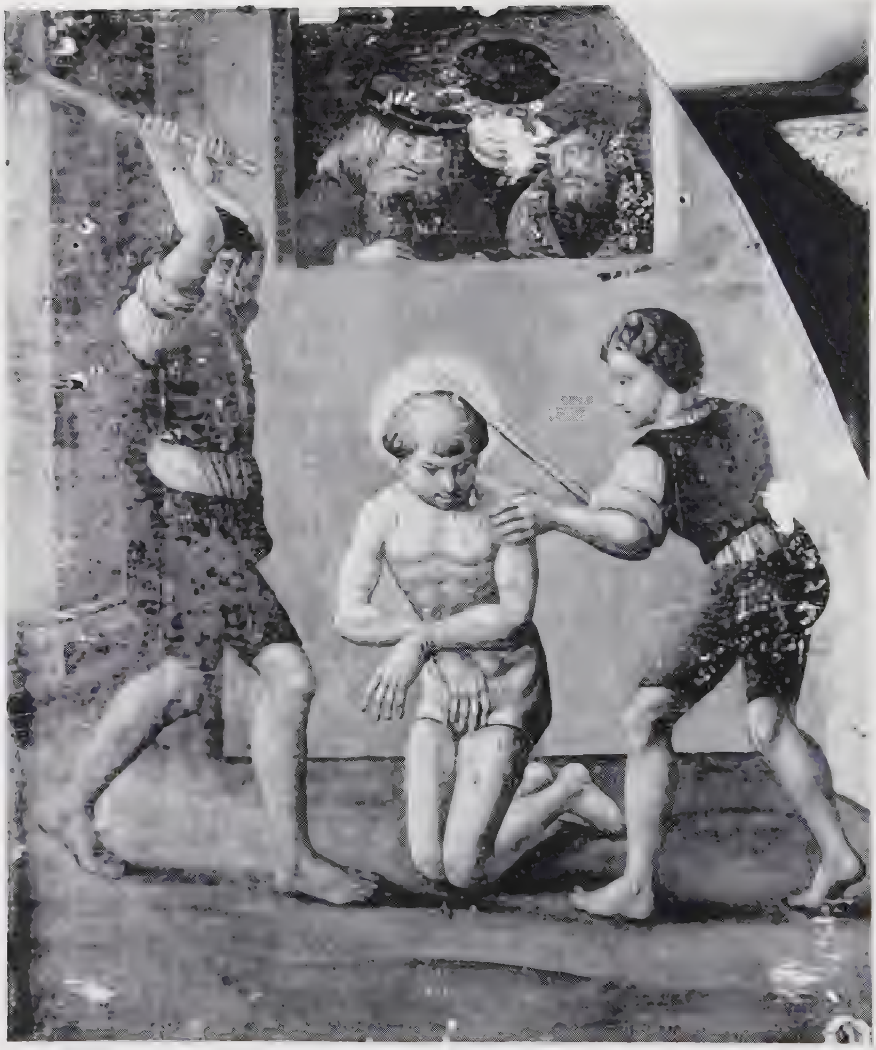

Fig. 131. THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA. CLUBBING OF ST. BLAISE, SECTION OF RETABLE. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

mother, one of the seven women united to St. Blaise in his tortures.

The general style is obviously very close to that of the retables of the Magdalene and of Sts. Thecla and John, but there are also many very specific contacts. It is in the compartment of the cudgeling that they are perhaps most numerous. One can scarcely doubt that the artist who painted the magistrate presiding over St. John's ordeal at the Latin Gate and the bearded retainer directly behind him was responsible also for the left of St. Blaise's two tormentors. Of the three men who view the beating from a window, the one at the right practically repeats the henchman who, with puckered nose and mouth, stands at the right and prods the fire beneath St. John's vat of oil. The spectator at the left in the window is reminiscent, in type and in the loosely flowing hair, of several of the Apostles in the Ascension and St. Joseph in the Epiphany from the chapel of the Annunciation. On the other hand, the tresses of Christ appearing to St. Blaise repeat the conventionalization of the locks of the Magdalene receiving her last communion. Such comparisons could be multiplied almost at will. The mother of the girl freed from the fishbone, for instance, is a replica of St. Thecla's mother trying to rouse her from her absorption in St. Paul's teaching, and the left carder of St. Blaise is a brother of the second prominent ecclesiastic from the left in the scene of the recovery of St. Thecla's arm. All the ecclesiastics in this scene indeed belong to the same class of human beings as St. Blaise himself when he is depicted as merely tonsured without the mitre. Above the patch of landscape in the compartment of the carding we can even see a little mass of the peculiar puffs of clouds that blow across the skies in the episodes of St. John's ordeal and of the acquisition of St. Thecla's relic. The dumb creatures who are the companions of St. Blaise's solitude betray as dismal an ignorance of zoology as do the beasts that St. Thecla quells.

With admirable restraint Angulo goes no further than to say that there should be compared with Master Oliva's works the fragments of a retable in a private collection at Barcelona, but I am strongly disposed to cast my vote again in favor of the Master of Pedro de Cardona as actually the proper candidate. Of unascertained ultimate provenience, the preserved pieces, all of which revert to the chastely tooled gold backgrounds of a century before, exhibit disparate themes, not revealing what the unifying subject of the retable was, full-lengths of Sts. John Evangelist and Onuphrius, compartments of Sts. Francis

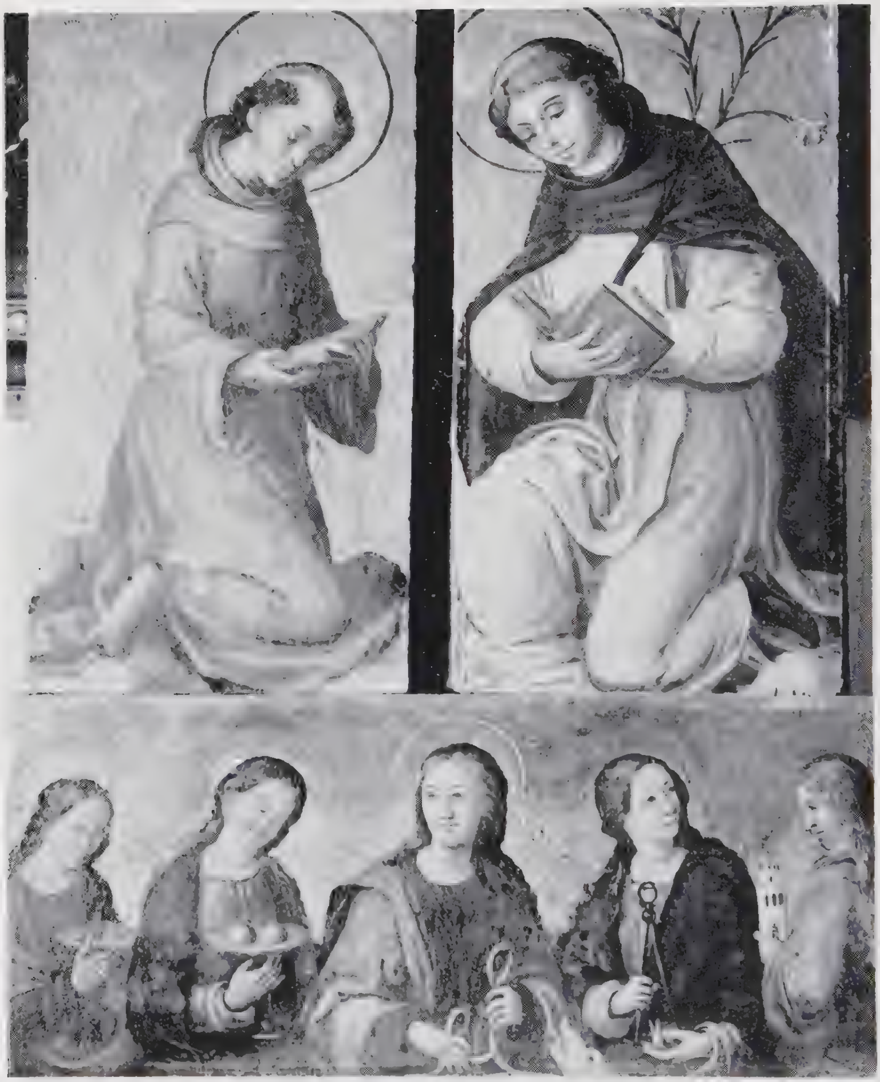

FIG. 132. THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA. STS. FRANCIS, DOMINIC, AND VIRGIN MARTYRS, SECTIONS OF RETABLE. PRIVATE COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

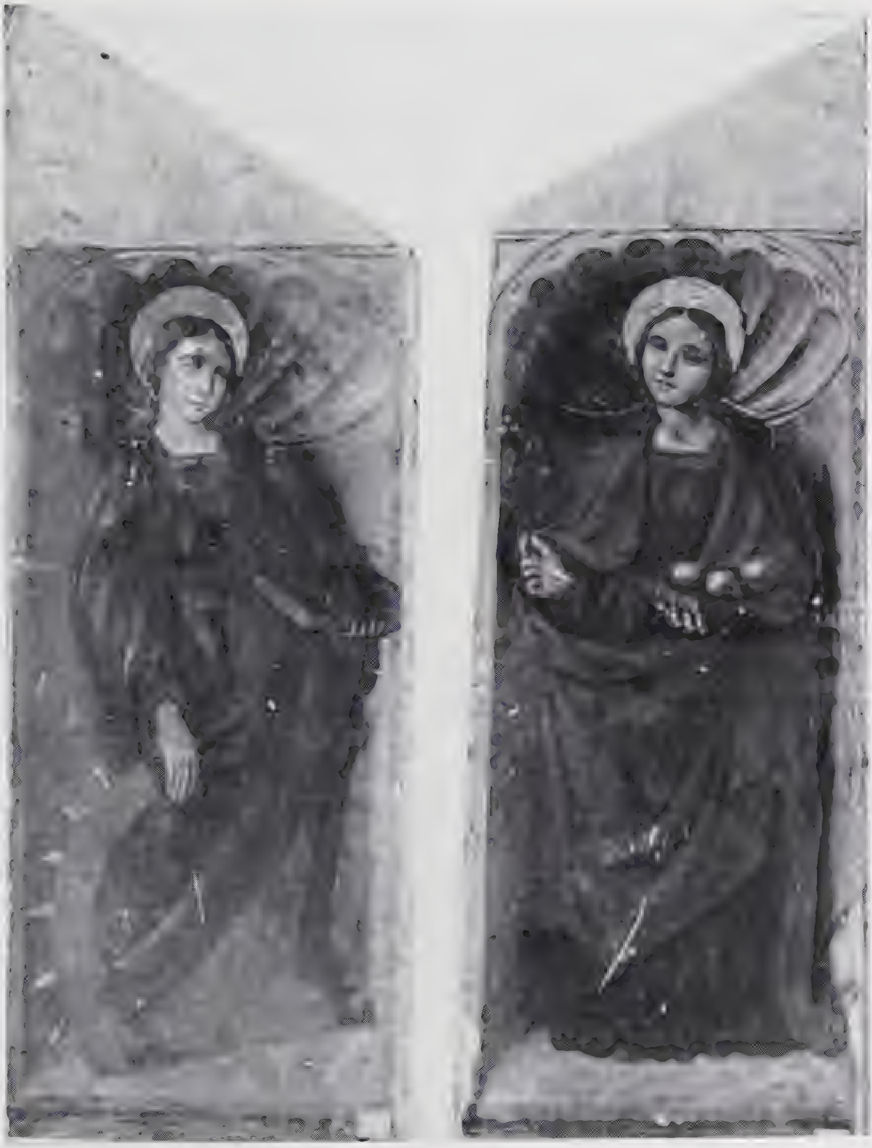

FIG. [illegible]. THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA (?). STS. CATHERINE AND DOROTHEA. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(Courtesy of Don Pedro Batlle Huguet)

and Dominic, both kneeling (Fig. 132), a representation of the dead Christ supported on the edge of His tomb by two standing angels, and, evidently from the predella, a horizontal panel in which there are aligned as half-lengths the virgin martyrs Lucy, Agatha, Quiteria,[19] Apollonia, and Barbara. The Sts. Francis and Dominic provide practically conclusive proof for the attribution, as illustrating a recurrent type in the Master of Pedro de Cardona's output. Indeed the St. Dominic is scarcely differentiated from the young server in the scene where the Magdalene washes Christ's feet, and the approximation to identity is not much less between the St. Francis and the cudgeled St. Blaise. But one need not search far to discover many other similarities. The angel at the right in the Pietà is only a variant of the type used for the St. Dominic and nearly repeats, furthermore, the sanctimonious expression of the highest angel at the left in the levitation of the Magdalene in the retable of the Diocesan Museum; the other angel supporting the dead Christ displays, as do also additional heads among the fragments, the Master's mode of manipulating the hair that appears on the Magdalene receiving her last communion; and the oldest man in the boat setting out for Marseilles in one of the compartments of the Magdalene's retable shows that the Master was quite capable of the manneristic sketchiness exemplified by the St. Onuphrius.

Two fragments of *guardapolvos* in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, depicting Sts. Catherine of Alexandria and Dorothea,[20] who is so rarely honored in early Spanish art (Fig. 133), are classified by Angulo in the circle of Master Oliva, but the Master of Pedro de Cardona appears to me the most likely, though not absolutely certain, candidate for their authorship. Indeed the learned and perceptive director of the Museum, Don Pedro Batlle Huguet, to whose kindness I am indebted for the photograph, as well as many other courtesies, writes me that he wonders whether the fragments, which were once to be seen in the cathedral, may not derive from the retable of Sts. Thecla and John. The closest counterpart for the St. Dorothea, among the Master's productions, is the Magdalene on the shore in the scene of the embarkation, but very characteristic of him also is the pietistic upward glance of the St. Catherine, as in the Sts. Lucy and Apollonia in the predella in private possession at Barcelona.

[19] With one of her usual emblems, a bound mad dog.

[20] With her regular emblems of the sprig of roses and the three apples.

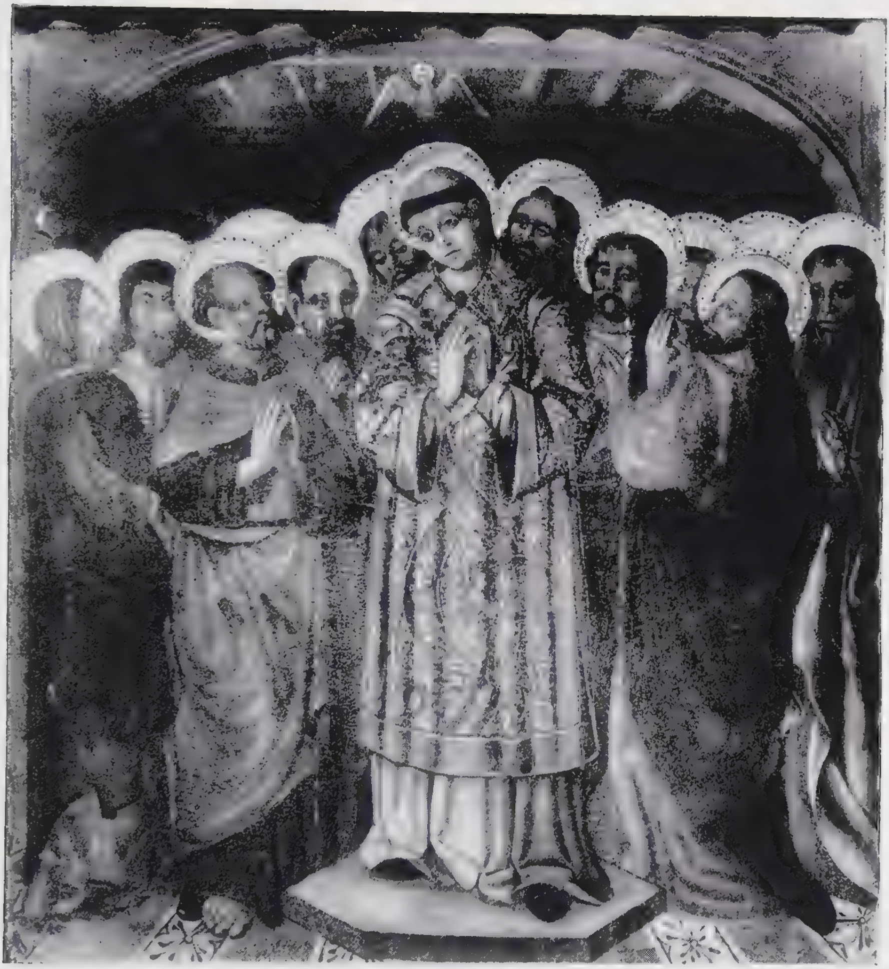

Fig. 134. FOLLOWER OF THE MASTER OF PEDRO DE CARDONA. ORDINATION OF ST. STEPHEN. ORRIOLS COLLECTION, VICH
(Photo. Mas)

We may confidently assign to the Master of Pedro de Cardona's atelier a panel in the Orriols Collection at Vich depicting St. Stephen on a pedestal in the midst of the twelve Apostles, a scene that in Spanish altarpieces of the protomartyr may be meant as a representation of his ordination; [21] but we should perhaps add the proviso that this was one of the sections of the retable which he turned over to an assistant in the shop (Fig. 134). The types reproduce those of his other works. St. Stephen's head, for example, is very similar to that of St. Blaise among the beasts in the panels from Aleixar; and the Apostle at the extreme left exhibits the Master's conventionalization of the hair into tresses like strands of yarn, as on Christ appearing to St. Blaise.

3. Master Oliva (Francisco Olives?)

The Master of Pedro de Cardona trained a somewhat less capable pupil whose surname, Oliva, has been uncovered in the records of the past which tantalizingly have refused to yield to us the more important fact of his teacher's appellation. The apposite documents concern a retable of Sts. Cosmas and Damian that has entered the Diocesan Museum of Tarragona from the church of the town of Vallmoll, north of the city. On August 15, 1553, the municipal council of Vallmoll agreed to offer to a Master Oliva 38 pounds for a retable of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in the parish church, and two days later they decided to summon him to the place to execute the commission.[22] It is exceedingly probable that the Master Oliva, who thus is proved to be the author of the extant retable, is identical (if we take into account the loose spelling of the period) with a painter, Francisco Olives, who, born at Reus in 1502, may be traced at Tarragona until 1570.[23] The date of his birth comes from a document of 1517, designating him as an assistant of Jaime Segarra and as then

---

[21] Vol. VI, p. 96.

[22] The two documents are published by Ramón Pinyes in the periodical *Tarragona i el camp*, 1934, no. 5, p. 8. The distinguished scholar and director of the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona, Don Pedro Batlle, has generously copied for me the article by Pinyes from this difficultly obtainable review.

[23] Cf. my vol. VII, p. 352, and Luisa Vilaseca Borrás, *Dos pintores reusenses del siglo XVI, Joan Arnaldis y Francesc Olives*, in *Revista del Centro de Lectura de Reus*, IV, 10 (1953), 109–111 (an article known to me only as summarized in the *Boletín Arqueológico* of Tarragona, 1953–1954, p. 93). For a mention of a Master *Olives* as residing in Tarragona in 1548, see Juan Serra Vilaró in the *Boletín Arqueológico* of Tarragona, 1950, July–December, 141.

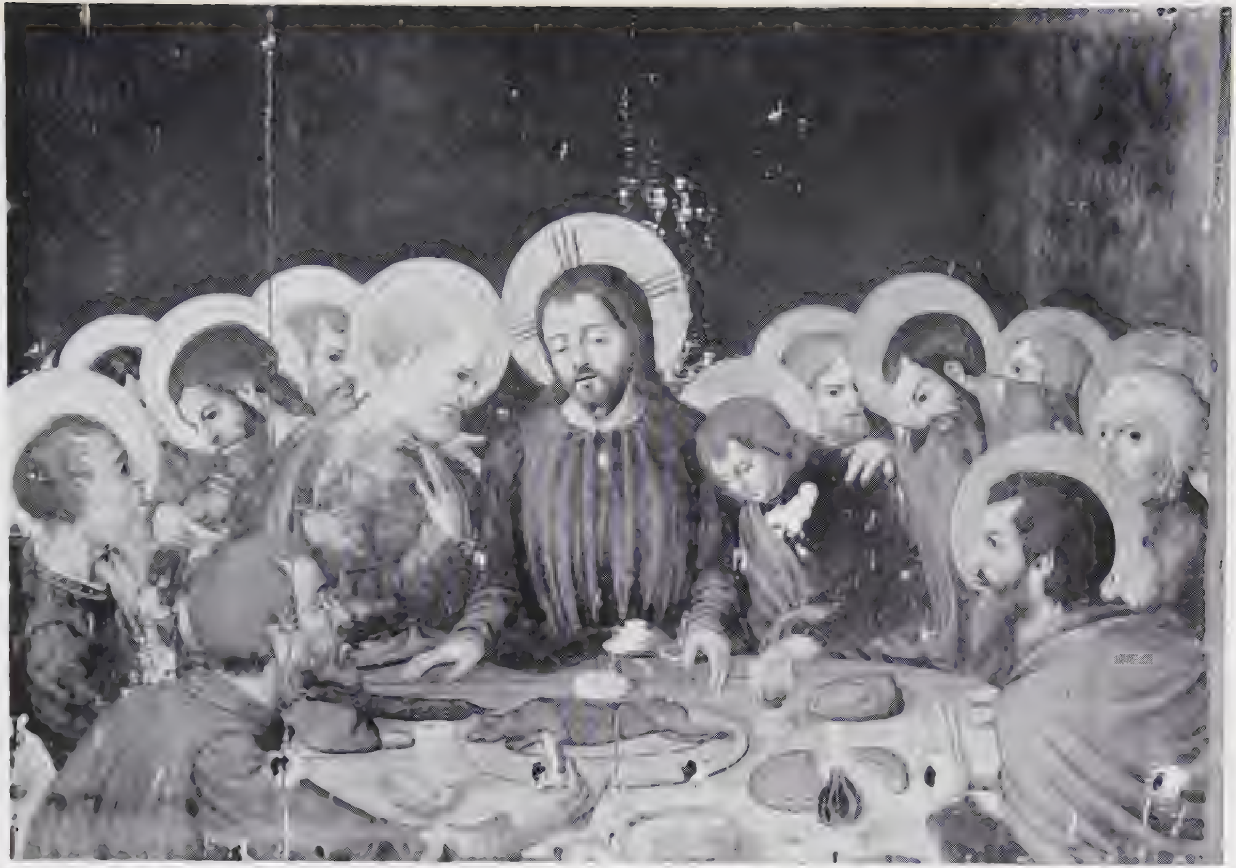

FIG. 135. MASTER OLIVA. LAST SUPPER, SECTION OF RETABLE FROM VALLMOLL. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

fifteen years old; [24] but, although in 1527 he is again mentioned in association with Segarra,[25] it is hard to discover any concrete evidence of the latter's influence upon Master Oliva.

The iconographic content of the Vallmoll retable is somewhat heterogeneous, but we could probably account for the variety of themes if we knew the minds of the municipal council and the reasons that called the altarpiece into being. Sts. Cosmas and Damian appear at full length in the principal compartment, and above, as usual, is the Crucifixion; but in this central division of the retable the Last Supper (Fig. 135) curiously intrudes beneath the effigies of the canonized physicians, though not as a predella. The penitent St. Jerome and St. Francis receiving the stigmata are proper enough pendants to each other in the upper sections of the lateral divisions, but they are scarcely related to the subjects in the middle of the retable or to what is depicted under them at the sides, for below St. Francis stands St. Stephen and below St. Jerome there is seen a representation of the miracle of the gentleman of Cologne.[26] No predella is preserved, and the panels, especially in the case of the Sts. Francis and Stephen, have been somewhat injured by their employment, when at one period in their vicissitudes the retable had been dismantled, as mere wood to form a confessional in the church of Vallmoll.

Oliva is so faithful an imitator of the Master of Pedro de Cardona that his works might almost be mistaken for creations of his preceptor, if they were not infected with some degree of provincialism. The debt to the Master of Pedro de Cardona is even more tangible in a second retable that we shall ascribe to Oliva, and yet it is so obvious in the types and pictorial modes of the Vallmoll panels as scarcely to require analysis. In the St. John of the Last Supper, for instance, Oliva has had very exactly in mind such a type as the youth who serves the meal at which the Magdalene washes the Saviour's feet in the retable from Pedro de Cardona's chapel, and the two dark-haired Apostles near St. John are derived from the kind of head employed for the suitor endeavoring to distract St. Thecla from her concentration on St. Paul's homily. One of the ways, however, by which the pupil can be distinguished from his inspirer is in his treatment of the hair, which he separates into less clearly defined strands, preferring the effect of a general mass of chevelure, and which, as well as the beard, he is less prone to muss into a purposed scragginess. Oliva's provincialism is betrayed by the persistence to so late a date as 1553 of a style that otherwise one would naturally assign to the first quarter of the century.

---

[24] See the above mentioned monograph on Segarra by Vilaseca Anguera, 39.

[25] *Ibid.*, 60.

[26] Vol. VII, p. 260.

The evidence for the imperative attribution to him of another work is stylistic, the retable in the chapel of the Balle family in the cloister of the cathedral of Tarragona. An inscribed tablet in the chapel[27] tells us that its foundation was due to the will of a distinguished merchant of the city, Arnaldo Balle, who died on December 29, 1535,[28] and that in accordance with the stipulations of the will his nephew, Pedro Balle, ordered the construction and ornamentation of the chapel. Thus the retable, the third at Tarragona under the Magdalene's invocation to fall within the cognizance of the present volume,[29] can hardly be dated before 1536. The panels are still ensconced in the original Plateresque frame. The central subject is the Magdalene's levitation, based in composition upon the version by the Master of Pedro de Cardona, and into the lower part of this panel are introduced the kneeling donors, an aged gentleman and lady at the left, who would be Arnaldo Balle and his wife, and a bearded man in middle life at the right, probably the nephew, Pedro. The compositions of all four smaller, narrative compartments at the sides follow closely the precedents of the Master of Pedro de Cardona, the Magdalene's washing of Christ's feet, the *Noli me tangere*, the departure for Marseilles (Fig. 136), and her last communion. The only real difference in the representation of the boat being set adrift for its eventual journey to Marseilles is that the henchman is depicted as walking to the beach with the oars instead of stacking them upon the sand. The theme of the painting formed in the lunette at the top of the structure is the Provençal prince's discovery upon the island of his wife and child miraculously restored to life by the Magdalene's intercession. In the compartments of the predella at either side of the Pietà are ranged at three-quarters length St. Jerome, St. Peter, St. Thecla (with the attribute of the arm emerging from the rock),[30] another virgin martyr whose identity I unfortunately failed to register in my notes, St. Anne with her young daughter, and St. Sebastian.

Oliva's authorship is abundantly manifest. To select just a few

---

[27] E. Morera y Llauradó, *Tarragona antigua y moderna*, Tarragona, 1894, p. 124.

[28] IIII Kalendas Ianuari MDXXXVI.

[29] See above, p. 321.

[30] See above, p. 324, n. 17.

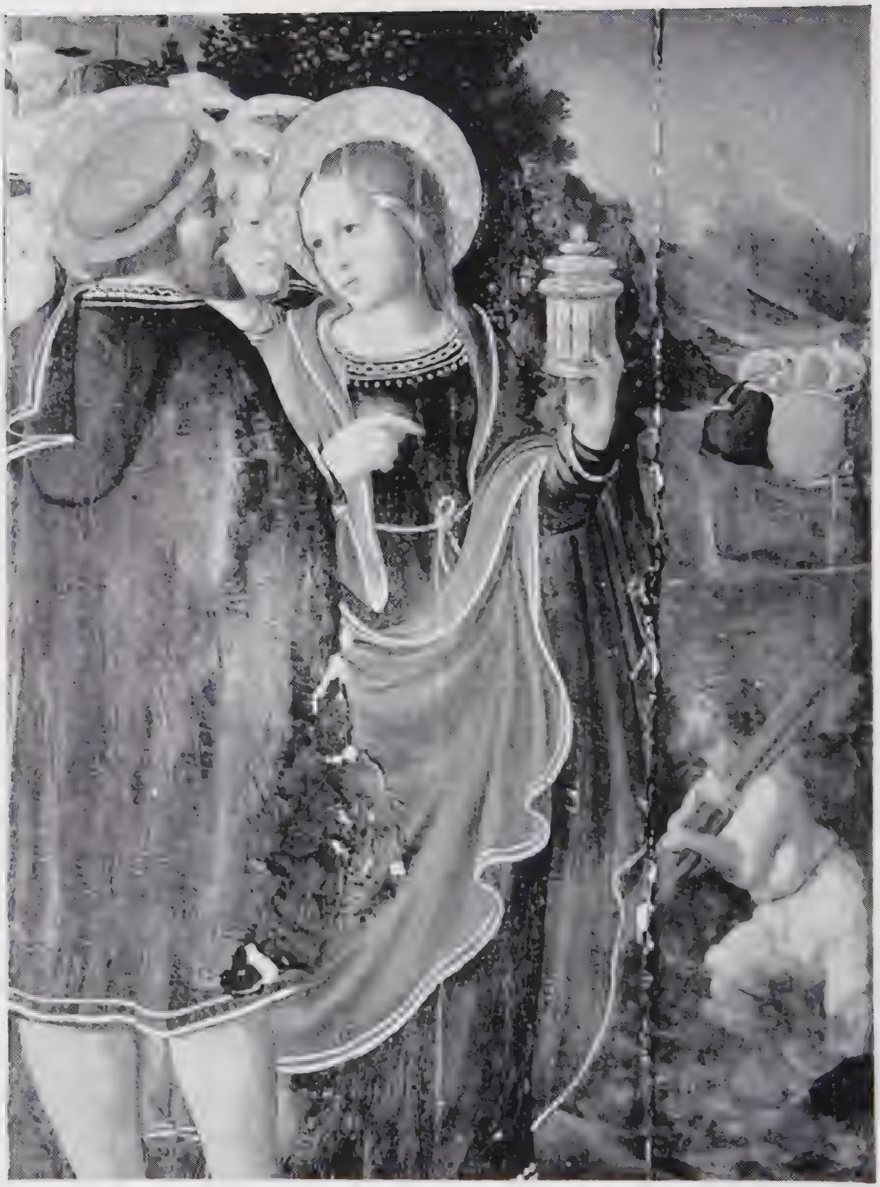

Fig. 136. MASTER OLIVA. THE MAGDALENE'S DEPARTURE FOR MARSEILLES, SECTION OF RETABLE. CATHEDRAL, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

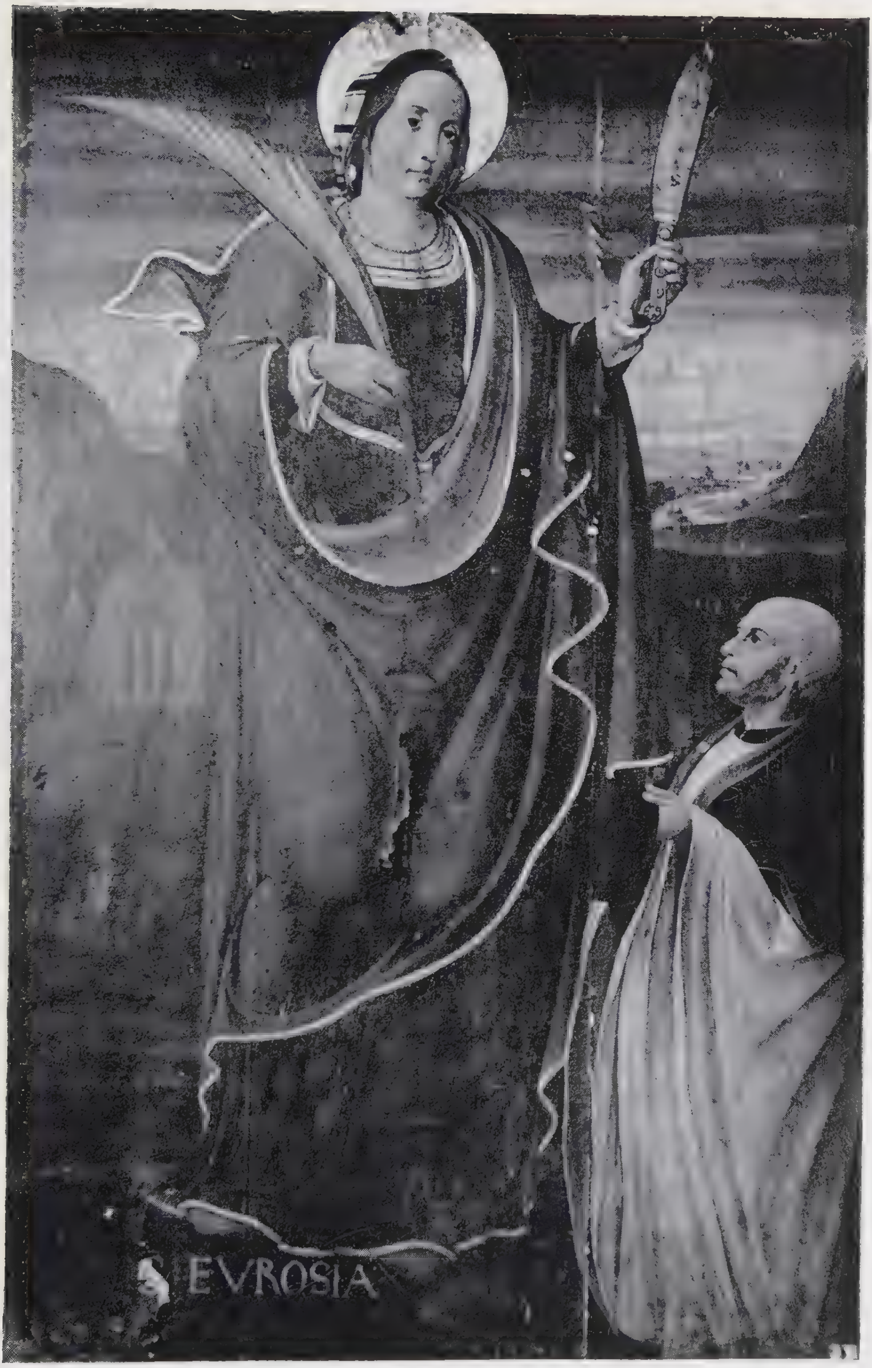

Fig. 137. MASTER OLIVA. ST. EUROSIA. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Sutrá*)

proofs, the St. Lazarus discussing with the Magdalene the departure for Marseilles is practically repeated several times in the Apostles of the Last Supper and absolutely duplicated in the soldier (at the right) deterred by the vision of the Virgin from slaying the gentleman of Cologne. The St. Jeromes in the two altarpieces are also virtually identical, but perhaps even more convincing is the fact that no one else paints just the kind of beady eyes that stare in both retables from the faces of many of the actors. The compositions, as we have seen, demonstrate very concretely the dependence upon the Master of Pedro de Cardona; but the types, here as in the Vallmoll retable, quite as plainly acknowledge this derivation, and it was indeed the resemblances in the types that first revealed to me Oliva's teacher before I perceived the compositional debts. In the process, the severity of the St. Lazarus Master, under whom the Master of Pedro de Cardona appears to have studied, has been diluted into still further blandness. Oliva, however, is a perfectly respectable and not unpleasing purveyor of sacred art, and like the Catalan Monogrammist in a retable of the same dedication, he had the initiative to attempt the problem of a picture within a picture, representing the church of the Magdalene's last communion as decorated with an altarpiece of the Virgin holding the dead Christ.

A panel of St. Eurosia now in the Diocesan Museum of Tarragona (Fig. 137) needs no further authentication as a sure work of Master Oliva than the practical identity of her head, even in the peculiarly beady eyes, with the type of the central Magdalene in the Balle retable. Angulo is surely right in bringing the picture into connection with the foundation of her cult in the cathedral on November 10, 1535, and he seems to imply that it would have been already painted for her altar when on February 17, 1548, arrangements were made to procure a relic of her body from Jaca and when, therefore, it may be deduced that the altar was ready for consecration. In any case, both dates fall within the years of Master Oliva's activity. In 1656, the picture was in the chapel of St. Luke in the cathedral,[31] but, when I studied it in 1927, it was hanging in the old Salas Capitulares. Eurosia is a rarely encountered saint, who is reported to have been martyred by the Moors in the eighth century and the devotion to

---

[31] For these data on the cult of St. Eurosia in the cathedral, see Sanç Capdevila, *op. cit.*, 49.

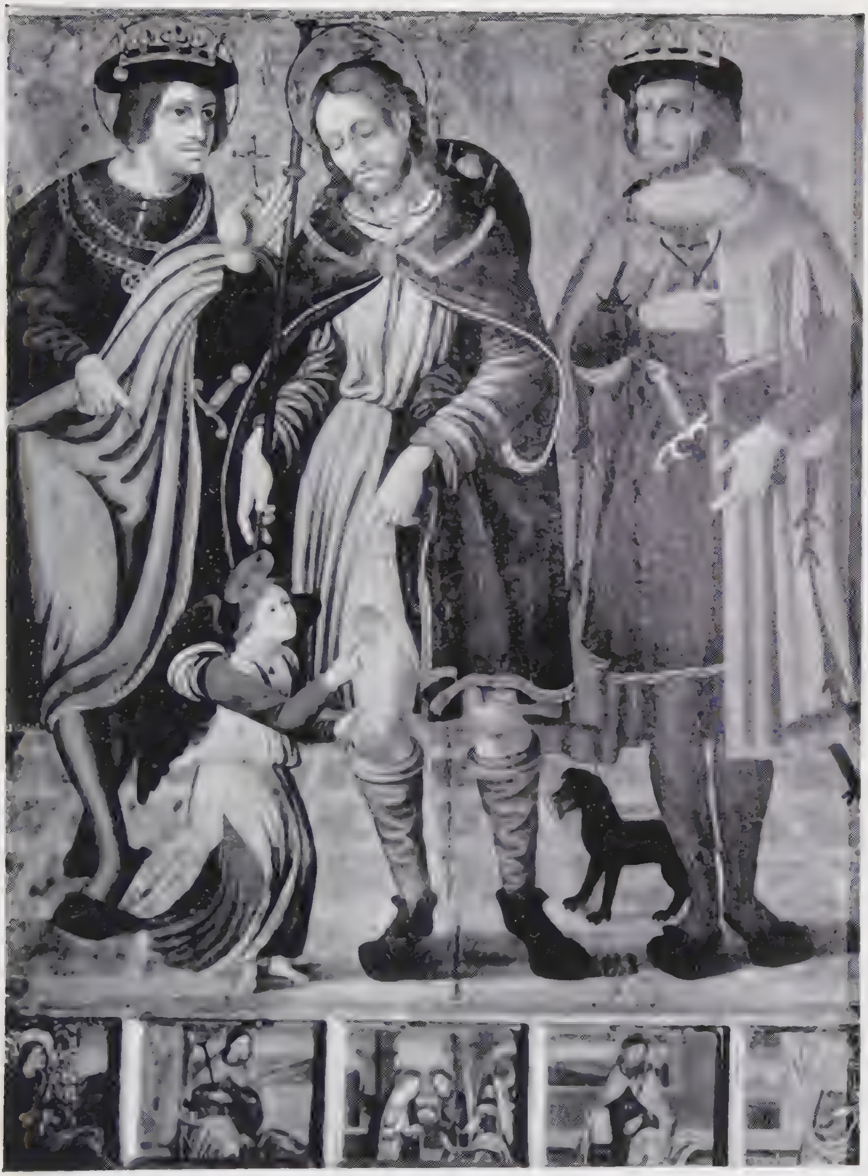

FIG. 138. FOLLOWER OF MASTER OLIVA (?). RETABLE.
MASRIERA COLLECTION, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

whom is centered at Jaca, where her body is said to repose; [32] and, since the introduction of her cult into the cathedral of Tarragona was a provision of the will of Juan Ximenes, a prior of the institution, who died in 1535, it most probably is he who is depicted as kneeling donor in the panel rather than his successor in the same office from 1535–1564 and with very much the same name, Juan Ximenes de Aragues.[33] Master Oliva would thus be delineating the cleric's features, as in the case of the Balles, from memory or only imagining them, unless Ximenes, with the prospect of fostering St. Eurosia's popularity, had already caused the picture to be painted before his death. In any case the figure accords exactly with the representation of the donors in the Balle retable in posture, in the way in which the cap (here a biretta) is held, and in the general mode of portraiture. The S on St. Eurosia's emblem, the knife, was probably meant to simulate the trade-mark of the blade-smith.[34] We should perhaps not fail to observe that Master Oliva's panel is scarcely differentiated in composition from the representation of St. Barbara at Oix, which I have ascribed to the St. Felix Master [35]; and since the latter was a more powerful and distinguished artist, the likelihood is that he was the giver rather than the receiver.[36]

One should perhaps not yield unreservedly to the temptation to ascribe to some follower of Master Oliva a retable in the Masriera Collection, Barcelona, whose whole main body consists of a single, large panel depicting St. Roch standing between Sts. Abdon and Sennen [37] and in whose predella the Nativity is set between Sts. Agnes,[38] Joseph,[39] Joachim,[40] and the Magdalene (all seated except in the last instance) (Fig. 138). It takes but a glance to see that the general manner falls within Master Oliva's norms, but I must confess that in the matter of concrete, specific proof, it was subsidiary details which led me, in the school of Tarragona, to his *entourage* — the nature of the glance of the eyes and the rather unusual figuration of the haloes, with large rays like arrows at the centre projecting to an outer ring, as in the cases of the St. Francis in the documented retable and the St. Eurosia. Analogies on a larger scale, however, are not lacking. Resemblances in human types reach practical identity in the St. Roch and the Apostle above St. John in the Last Supper of the retable of Sts. Cosmas and Damian; and in general the beards and moustaches are treated in Master Oliva's fashions. The background, archaistically, is still of boldly diapered gold.

---

[32] See the Bollandists under the day of her feast, June 25, and Antonio Durán Gudiol in *Argensola*, VI (1955), 297.

[33] The chronological list of the priors of Tarragona is given by Capdevila, *op. cit.*, 150.

[34] See my vol. IV, p. 462.

[35] P. 109.

[36] Angulo attributes to Master Oliva also a Crucifixion that, he says, is in the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona and comes from Pobla de Claramunt (near Igualada in the province of Barcelona), but no one at Tarragona has been able to find for me in the Museum any such panel. A Crucifixion is included among the fragments of a retable that have entered the Museum probably from Pobla de *Montornés* (just east of Tarragona), but they belong to a considerably later moment in the sixteenth century.

[37] Represented, as usual, in the guise of kings, the one at the left here holding a cross.

[38] She seems to carry in her lap a lamb as her emblem.

[39] Bearing a staff or crutch.

[40] With the shepherd's crook.

4. THE ALFORJA MASTER (FRANCISCO RIBES?)

In the artistic *milieu* of Tarragona at the beginning of the Renaissance, it is possible to isolate yet another personality who is much less closely affiliated than Master Oliva with the Master of Pedro de Cardona and whom I baptize with the title of the Alforja Master from the panel, now in the Museum of Reus, that derives from the town of Alforja, west of Tarragona, and depicts St. Michael with his angels victorious over Satan and his minions (Fig. 139); [41] but we shall eventually consider the possibility, though not certainty, that Francisco Ribes was his real name. The dimensions of the Reus picture are two metres in height by one in width, and it is legitimate to guess that so large a panel must have been the centre of a retable in the parish church of Alforja, which is dedicated to St. Michael, or a lateral compartment in a huge altarpiece in the edifice. If we leave out of account the painter's characteristic types of humanity by which almost any true artist expresses his individuality, his most distinctive trait is his fondness for heavily shadowing the countenances. In the sphere of technical performance he is at least the Pedro de Cardona Master's equal. One work that we shall eventually claim for him shows some sort of relationship to the Valencian school.

[41] Vilaseca, in his book on Jaime Segarra that I have cited at the beginning of this chapter, places (p. 40) a point of interrogation after the provenience from Alforja, but in a letter to me he definitely states such to be the source of the picture. Since I owe the photograph from which my illustration is made to his kindness, I am particularly sorry to disagree with his attribution, however tentative, to Segarra.

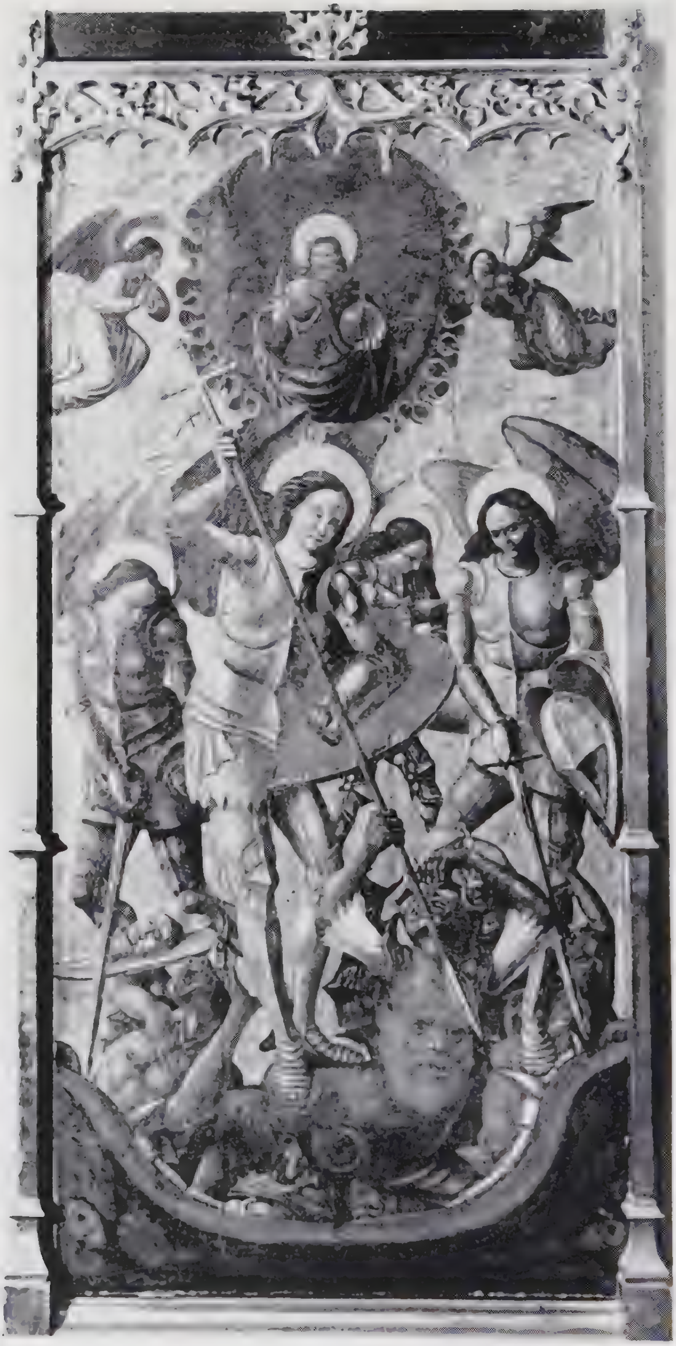

FIG. 139. THE ALFORJA MASTER. ST. MICHAEL'S VICTORY OVER SATAN, PANEL FROM ALFORJA. MUSEUM, REUS
(*Courtesy of Don Salvador Vilaseca Anguera*)

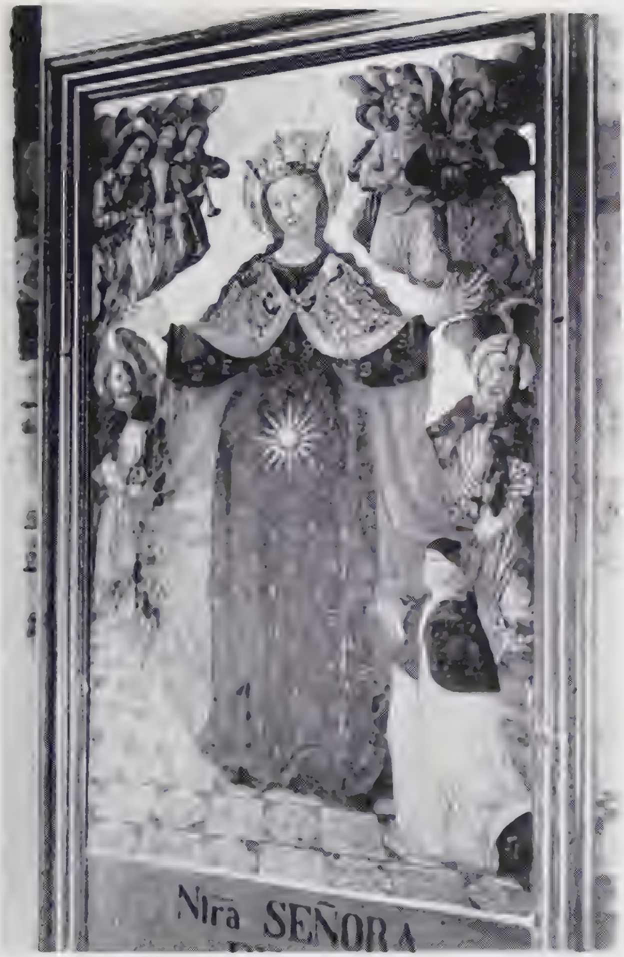

Fig. 140. THE ALFORJA MASTER. VIRGEN DE LA ESPERANZA. CATHEDRAL, TARRAGONA
(Photo. Sutrá)

The credit turns out to belong to him for having painted two panels at Tarragona itself which Angulo[42] had already assigned to a single artist, one depicting the Virgen de la Esperanza and the other constituting a devotional representation of St. Roch. The original location of the Virgen de la Esperanza (Fig. 140) was the chapel of S. Salvador in the cloister of the cathedral, where permission to construct a retable in her honor was granted in 1537,[43] but the panel has now been moved to the chapel of Nuestra Señora opening on the same enclosure. The provenience of the St. Roch, now in the Diocesan Museum (Fig. 141), is not definitely known, but the picture probably once decorated some part of the cathedral or of another church at Tarragona. The Virgen de la Esperanza stands with the symbol of the sun (here not containing the Child) upon her abdomen,[44] worshipped by angels and a kneeling clerical donor. St. Roch is likewise conceived as an erect effigy for cult, accompanied by his symbol of the dog and by angels, of whom two crown him, another pair hold votive candles, and a fifth, as one of his regular iconographical attributes,[45] blesses the sore of the plague upon his leg. Concrete evidence for the ascription of both panels to the Alforja Master is the reappearance of the types of angels that we have observed in the picture now at Reus and the peculiar chiaroscuro, especially in the celestial spirit at the left beside the Virgen de la Esperanza. It should be noted also that the musical angel in the upper right corner above Our Lady displays just the mannered bend of the head that is seen in the similarly placed angel accompanying the mandorla of the Eternal Father over the St. Michael. There is a perceptible facial resemblance between the Virgin and the Alforja archangel, and the St. Roch exhibits the same lean canon for the human form as the St. Michael and his aides-de-camp. Among a number of possible examples of some degree of relationship between the Alforja Master and the Master of Pedro de Cardona, we may select the angel above St. Roch's dog who possesses a kind of countenance often cropping forth in the output of the latter artist, as especially in the young server at the meal where the Magdalene washes Christ's feet, the middle angel at the left in her

---

[42] *Op. cit.*, note at bottom of p. 357.

[43] Sanç Capdevila (*op. cit.*, 85) gives the donor as a priest of the cathedral, Pedro Mir, and the date as November 18, 1537; Juan Serra Vilaró (*Boletín Arqueológico*, Tarragona, July-December, 1950, p. 143) calls him Pedro Nin and sets the document in September, 1537.

[44] Vol. VI, p. 254.

[45] Vol. IV, pp. 47–48.

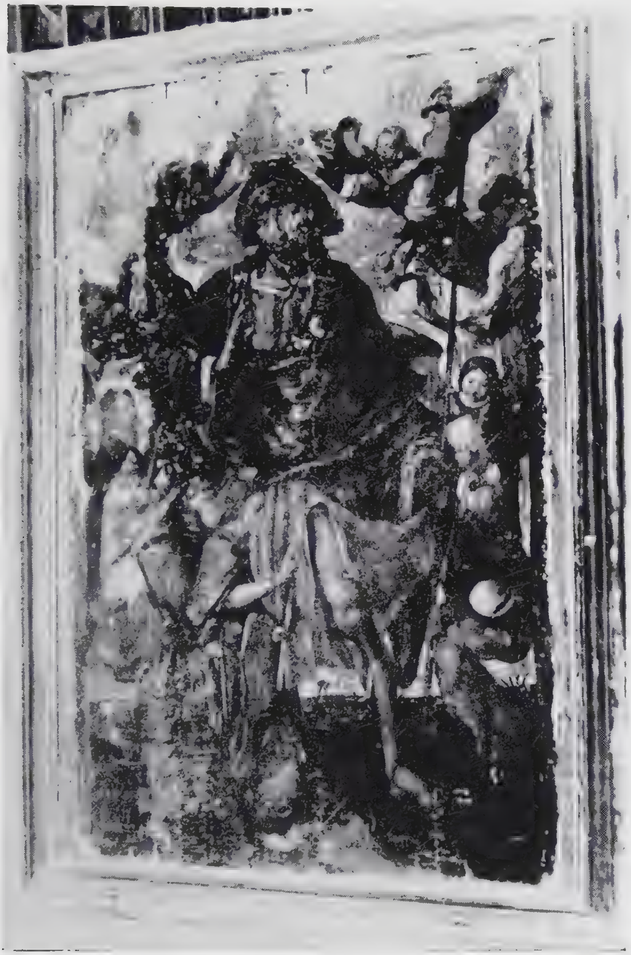

FIG. 141. THE ALFORJA MASTER. ST. ROCH.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Sutrá*)

levitation, the bending angel beside her in the last communion, and even in the St. Blaise undergoing a bastinado.

The attribution of a panel of the *Anna selbdritt*, with a kneeling layman in smaller scale as devotee or perhaps donor, now in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, remains no longer such an enigma to me as when in 1934 I saw the picture *in situ* over an altar at the left in the *ermita* of the Virgen del Camino at Cambrils, just west of this city, since my subsequent discovery of the Alforja Master's personality clearly reveals him as the author (Fig. 142). The anachronistic persistence of embossings of the haloes and other accessories and the retention of a gold background might mislead the critic for the moment, but he will soon observe that the personal types and pictorial modes are later than the fifteenth century; and I submit that two separate artists could not have done heads and headdresses so nearly identical as those of the Alforja St. Michael and the Cambrils Virgin. The kneeling layman also is conceived in very much the same way as the donor of the Virgen de la Esperanza.

The definition of the Alforja Master's personality also rescues Saralegui and me from floating about in search of a Valencian attribution for a Nativity in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, and lands us on the secure ground of its inclusion in this artist's preserved achievements; and I publish a better illustration (Fig. 143) than I was able to obtain for volume XI,[46] in order to bring more clearly into relief the authorship. The very fact that the picture entered the Museum from one of the dependencies of the cathedral ought to have warned us against seeking too readily the work of a Valencian so far north on the east coast, although the production of Tarragona in the Middle Ages and Renaissance was touched more than once by the style of the southern artistic centre. It is the panel of St. Roch that furnishes the most concrete link with the Nativity. The shepherd at the extreme right, even in the tilt of the head, practically duplicates the St. Roch himself, and there is another repetition, since the foremost kneeling angel is not differentiated from the one who blesses St. Roch's scar from the plague. Indeed to all the angels in the Nativity analogies are forthcoming in the Alforja Master's other paintings, and in particular the angel just behind Mary is a close facial counterpart of the Virgen de la Esperanza. St. Joseph and the two shepherds exhibit his characteristic juxtaposition of passages of light and shade.

---

[46] Fig. 34.

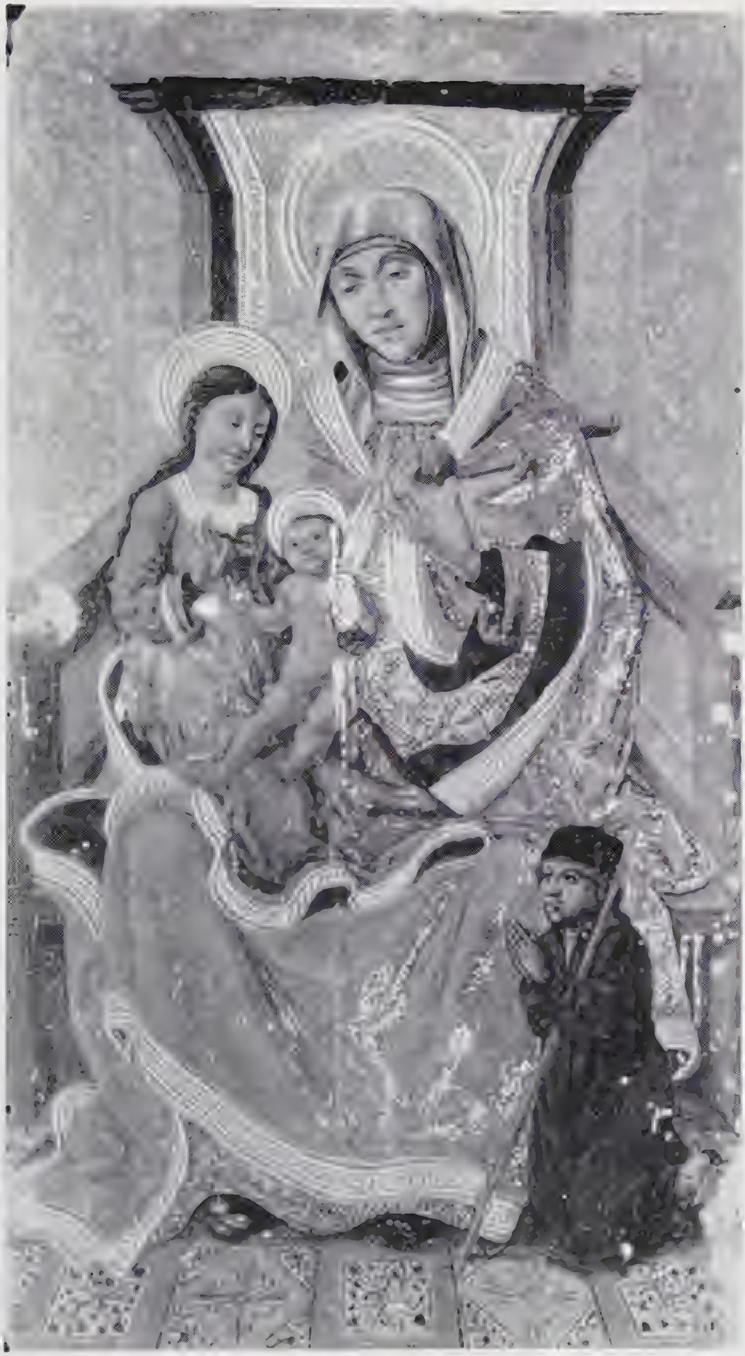

FIG. 142. THE ALFORJA MASTER. *ANNA SELBDRITT*
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo Mas*)

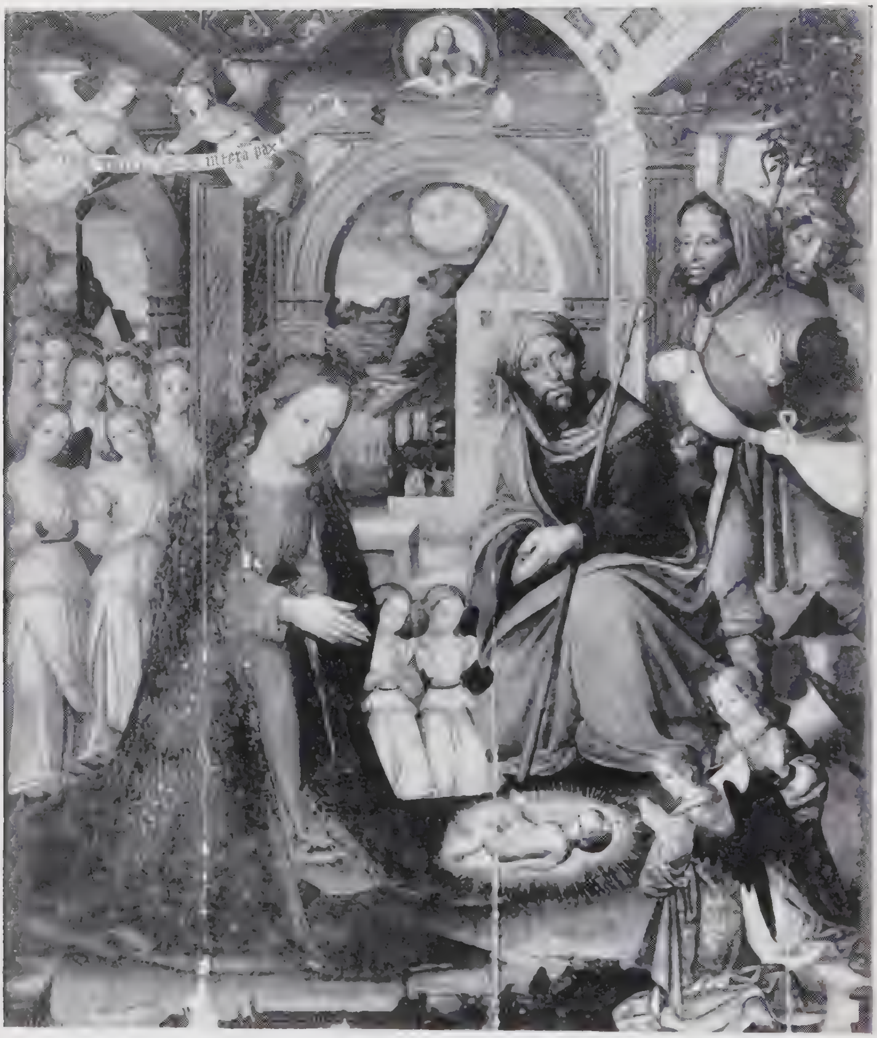
in terra pax

Fig. 143. THE ALFORJA MASTER. NATIVITY. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

Although I feel sure that the emergence of the Alforja Master's individuality would now convince Saralegui[47] that he was wrong in assigning the Nativity to the Valencian Cabanyes Master, yet he had sound reasons for his proposition in the surprising similarity of the Virgin and the angels to the Valencian's representations of such personages and in the fact that compositionally the picture is well-nigh a replica of the Cabanyes Master's rendering[48] in the fragments of a retable which the Diocesan Museum at Valencia used to possess. There are, however, perceptible divergences between the manners of the two painters, above all in the Alforja Master's more strongly virile types of men, and yet it is particularly the resemblance in composition between the two versions of the Nativity that virtually compels us to believe in an interconnection. Since it is scarcely credible that the Cabanyes Master should have been commissioned to do a Nativity like that in the Valencian Diocesan Museum as far away as Tarragona or its region, where the Alforja Master could have seen it, or unless there was a common, unascertained source for both renderings, the probability is that the Alforja Master had visited Valencia, although in general he reveals less palpable traces of this city's school than does the Master of Pedro de Cardona.

Similarities to the style of the Alforja Master emerge in a large predella in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona, whose antecedents cannot be traced further back than its presence in the cathedral of the city (Fig. 144), but they are perhaps not sufficiently concrete for assigning it to him with surety. The iconography of the central compartment is rather anomalous, a treatment of the Pietà in which there is combined with the dead Christ only the supporting figure of John Evangelist. The four lateral sections are consigned to standing saints, the Magdalene balancing her sister Martha, the aged hermit Onuphrius contrasted with a dapper, young canonized layman, whom I fail to recognize. The accordance with the Alforja Master's general modes is very tangible, particularly in the sombre chiaroscuro on the Saviour and on the hallowed youth; the analogy of the Saviour in countenance and spare physique to the St. Roch is striking; and the St. John Evangelist is scarcely varied from any of the artist's representations of angels.

The evidence for the equation of the Alforja Master with Francisco

---

[47] *Archivo español de arte*, XVIII (1945), 18.

[48] See my vol. VI, fig. 171.

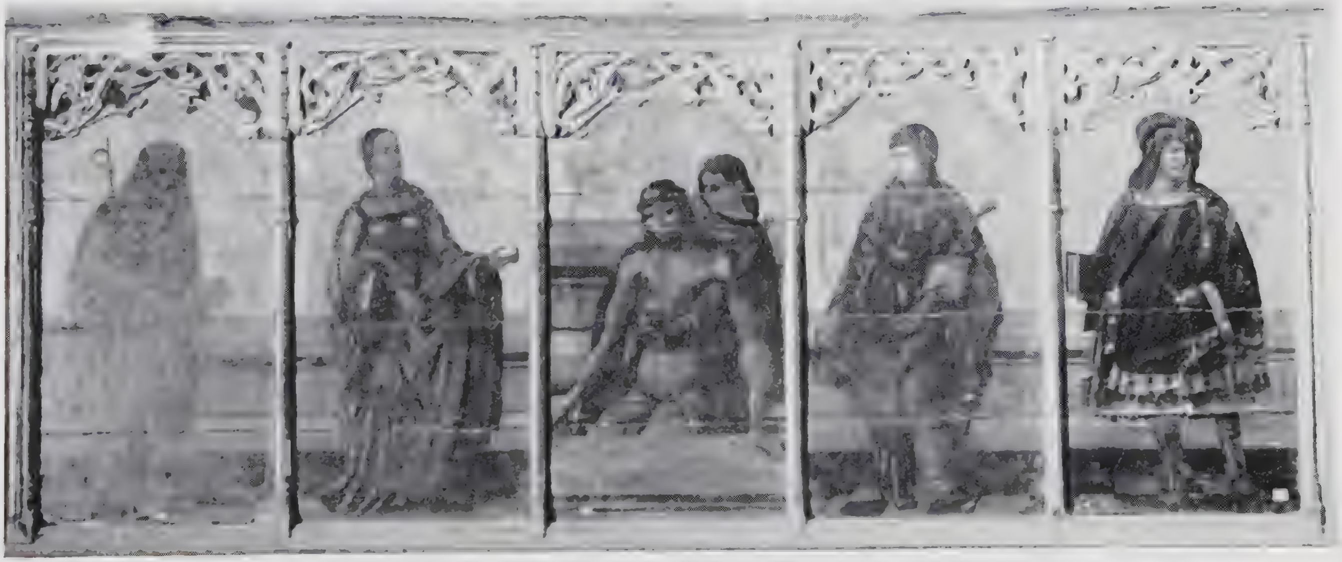

Fig. 144. THE ALFORJA MASTER (?). PREDELLA. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, TARRAGONA

(*Photo. Sutrá*)

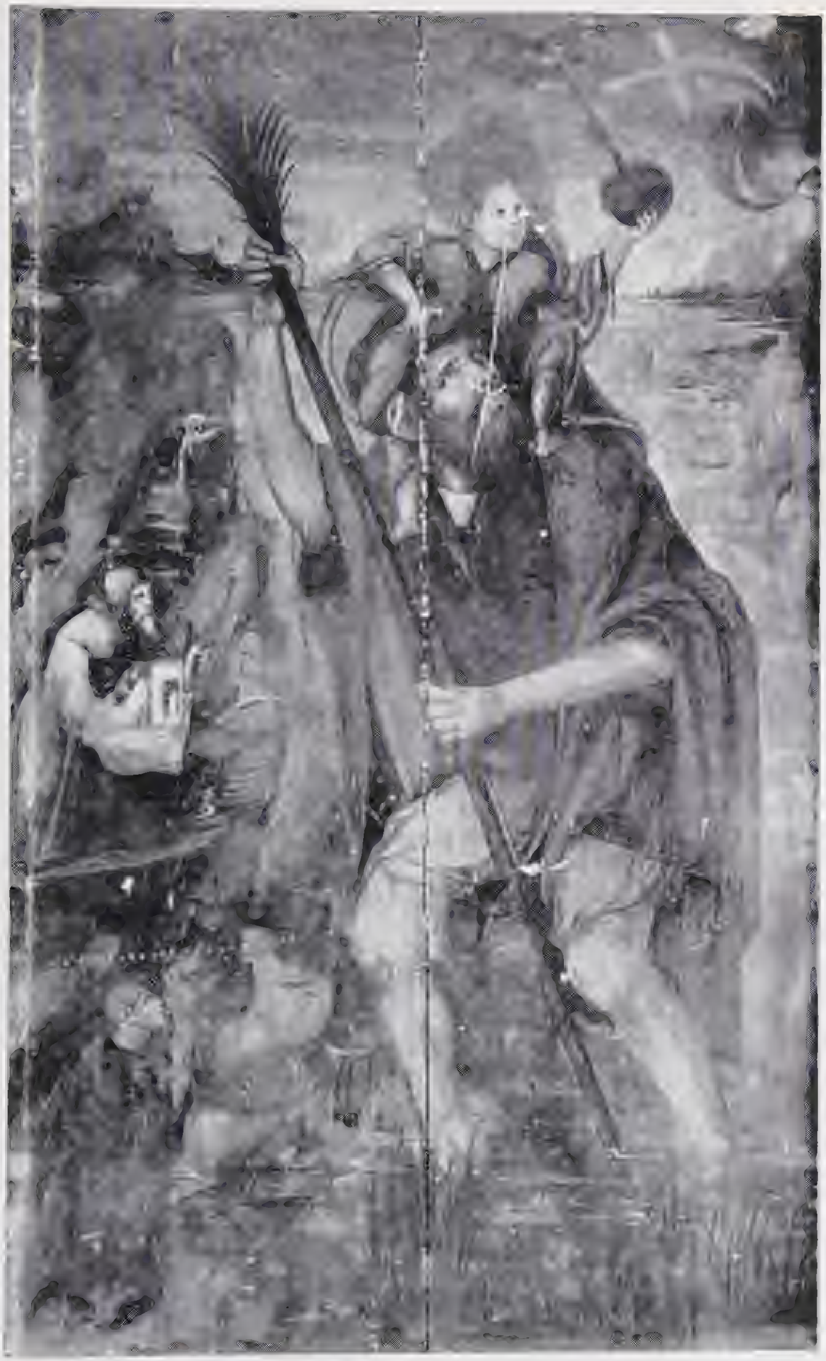

Fig. 145. FRANCISCO RIBES. ST. CHRISTOPHER. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, BARCELONA
(Photo. Mas)

Ribes is stylistic, and, since in the latter's one documented extant work, a panel of St. Christopher that from the Dominican convent of Sta. María de Montesión, Barcelona, has entered the Diocesan Museum of the city, the material for comparison is rather limited, we have no right to make the identification absolute (Fig. 145). On January 10, 1537, Ribes signed a receipt for the payment given to him for a retable of St. Christopher in the convent of Montesión, and, although in the document it is stated that the painter Pedro Serafí collaborated to the extent of doing two narrative compartments and of renovating a pair of others, the panel in the Museum with the effigy of St. Christopher, as manifestly the central piece of the structure, must embody Ribes's own handicraft. He was probably the painter of this name who married an Angela Cabrera in the cathedral of Barcelona on January 5, 1516, [49] and who in 1530, 1538, and 1541 is recorded in the city as an official of the guild of bridlemakers in which the painters were still enrolled. In addition to the close and obvious correspondence in general style to the Alforja Master's modes, perhaps the most persuasive item of detailed proof is found in the countenance of St. Christopher which strikingly reproduces a type often used by this Master and reaches practical identity in the St. Joseph of the Nativity in the Diocesan Museum, Tarragona. The two osseous knobs on the hallowed giant's right knee are afforded precisely the pronounced delineation that we observe, in this Museum, on the left knee of the St. Roch; and the donor, who would be the Dionís de Clasquerí mentioned in the receipt for payment, is treated with the dwarfed proportions and attitude of the Alforja Master's frequent representations of such personages. The figuration of St. Christopher's halo is duplicated in the large, separate predella of the Tarragona Museum of the Diocese.

---

[49] The painter Francisco Juan Ribes who married in the cathedral an Elisabet Reverter or Revarter at the beginning of 1513 and made a will in 1515 would be someone else. For the facts on both painters, see J. Mas in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras*, Barcelona, VI (1911–1912), 311, and J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, I, 3 (1943), 34, and II, 2 (1944), 71.

CHAPTER XIV

WESTERN CATALONIA

Since the activities of the artists who now concern us extended often into the province of Huesca, the question might arise whether they ought to be credited to the Aragonese or Catalan school, and indeed painters from Aragon sometimes worked here side by side with their Catalan rivals; but the part of the province of Huesca adjacent to Catalonia is preponderantly Catalan in character, and the tradition of patronage of Catalan art was already well established in the region, for instance in the persons of Pedro García de Benabarre and Pedro Despallargues. Moreover, as we take up each artist, we shall indicate or at least suggest indirectly reasons, objective or subjective, for choosing the Catalan school in which to list them.

1. The Javierre Master

Of the two towns called Javierre in the province of Huesca, the one near Bielsa in the Pyrenees managed to preserve in its parish church from the destruction of the Spanish civil war not only the Franco-Gothic antependium of St. Eulalia that we have discussed in volume IV [1] but also a retable of the early sixteenth century from which, as his principal extant work, we may coin an appellation for a painter whose vogue seems to have been largely focused on the borders of Catalonia and Aragon. The luxuriance of the figuration in the embossed haloes at Javierre would point to the latter alternative, and the Latin of the inscriptions in the retable seems to show the influence of the Castilian of Aragon rather than of the Catalan language; [2] but the existence of works by him as far east in Catalonia as Tarrasa more strongly argues for the former possibility, and the use of a checkered pattern in the gold background of the central compartment is a Catalan, rather than Aragonese, practice of the early Renaissance, especially with Juan Gascó and his circle. Likewise, in other works by him the embossing of the gold backgrounds points, not to Aragon, but to Catalonia. The haloes can be explained merely by the demands of the Aragonese aesthetic *milieu* but are not absolutely without any Catalan precedent. The character of the Latin would imply only that Castilian was spoken at Javierre. The painter of Huesca, Francisco Baget, whose personality has not yet been securely rescued from the past,[3] executed a retable for the town of Javierre de la Garganta (also called Javierre de los Cornudos) the commission for which had been farmed out to him by his colleague, Juan de la Abadía II, on October 1, 1500,[4] but unfortunately this does not allow us to identify our Master with Baget, since Javierre de la Garganta is not the Javierre close to Bielsa but the one a little farther south near Albella (where no panels of the period are preserved).

---

[1] P. 507.

[2] See just below, n. 5.

The central compartment of the retable at our Javierre displays a virgin martyr enthroned between two angels, in all probability St. Eulalia whom the above-mentioned antependium shows to have enjoyed a cult in the church. The lateral sections are not subdivided but constituted by single large panels of the Nativity of Christ and the Epiphany (Fig. 146); there is the customary pinnacle of the Crucifixion; and two pieces of the predella also remain, each with pairs of saints at three-fourths length against the background of a brocade, Sebastian and James Minor [5] in one and Anne and Sylvester in the other.

The author is very little touched by the Renaissance. The principal effect of the new movement upon him has been to liberate his forms slightly from the pinched qualities of the primitive and to endow his women and young men with somewhat more ideal beauty. In the main, however, he is merely a continuer of modes like those of the Vergós shop, softening the types, to be sure, but retaining the harshly broken and still Flemish lines of the draperies. The tendency to opulent ornamentation of a painting that had reached its culmination with the members of the Vergós family lives on in him,

---

[3] See below, p. 714.

[4] See below, p. 716, and the articles by Ricardo del Arco in *Seminario de arte aragonés*, I (1945), 26, and IV (1952), 67, and in *Archivo español de arte*, XX (1947), 225; also his *Catálogo monumental de la provincia de Huesca*, Madrid, 1942, p. 136, n. 1.

[5] Like his companions he is labelled by an inscription on the ledge beneath — "Sante Jaime"; but he must be St. James Minor since he has none of the easily recognizable pilgrim's attributes of Santiago. The inscriptions are meant to be Latin vocatives, with *Sante* for *Sancte*, but the spelling is influenced by Castilian rather than Catalan, with *Ana* (instead of the Catalan, Agna) for Anna, with *San* (instead of the Catalan, Sant) before the name Sylvester, and with *Jaime* (instead of the Catalan, Jaume) for Jacome (cf. my vol. III, p. 281, n. 1).

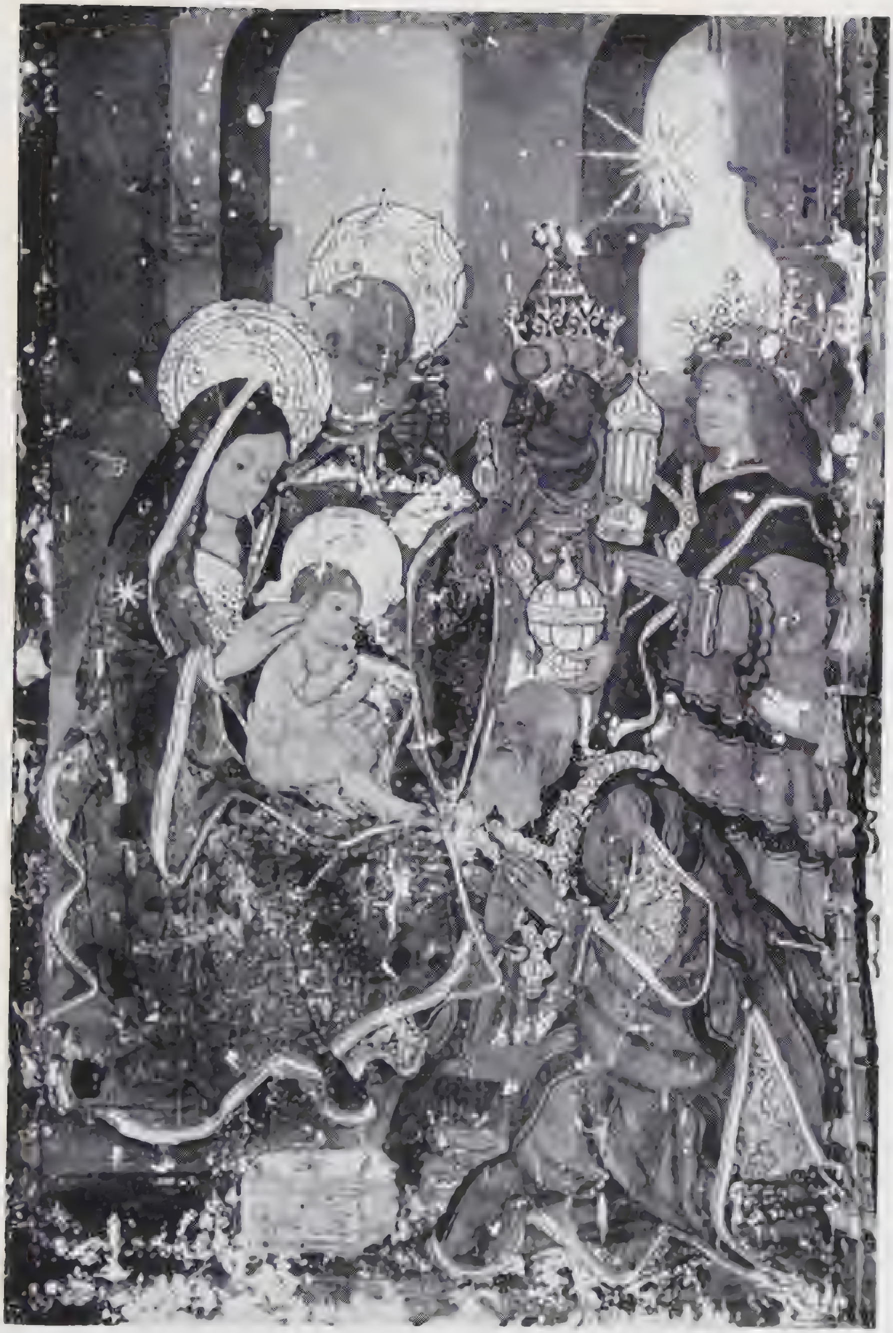

Fig. 146. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. EPIPHANY, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, JAVIERRE
(*Photo. Mas*)

not only combining with a possible Aragonese influence to cause the ostentatious embossings of haloes and other details but also declaring itself in the generous introduction of brilliant and large-figured brocades. In intrinsic merit his gifts lie half-way between provincial rusticity and the attainments of a true artist.

Three of his works have drifted into the Diocesan Museum at Lérida. The one in which the hand of the painter of the retable at Javierre most obviously emerges is a predella, of unascertained provenience,[6] with the Crucifixion in the middle and pairs of saints in the other compartments standing in the majority of instances before landscapes but in two cases against the brocaded hangings that had so long been a convention of Spanish altarpieces. The landscape of the Crucifixion includes the rather unusual detail of the hanging Judas. The saints read, from left to right, Barbara, a canonized bishop, Catherine, Benedict, Sebastian, Lucy, James Major, and Margaret (Fig. 147). The virgin martyrs incorporate the same maidenly type as the Javierre St. Eulalia and the Madonna. The peculiar glance of the Child in the Javierre Epiphany is often repeated in the Lérida predella, for instance in the St. Benedict, and in general almost all the figures illustrate the Master's distinctive treatment of the eyes. The Sebastian reiterates the curious conception of this saint at Javierre, in which the mediaeval Spanish representation of him as a dapper, entirely clad gentleman of the period is abandoned but Italian nudity is partially clothed, through natural indigenous reticence, in a spreading mantle.

The second piece by the Javierre Master in the Diocesan Museum of Lérida, which comes from a source unknown at least to me, is a large central panel of a retable depicting St. Vincent seated upon a pretentious throne and serenaded by angels (Fig. 148). The architecture of the throne now manifests a timid influence of the Renaissance, especially in the shell-shaped semidomes of the little niches of its sides in which, according to the old Flemish practice, he has simulated statuettes of Prophets. St. Vincent is marred by exactly the same pallid and almost insipid countenance as the St. John of the Crucifixion in the Lérida predella; the lower angel at the left should be compared with the St. Catherine; the balancing angel at the right affords a pronounced example of the Master's characteristic eyes; and the Prophet at the bottom in the left side of the throne belongs to

---

[6] See an article by J. Soldevila Faro in *Aragón*, February, 1933, p. 28.

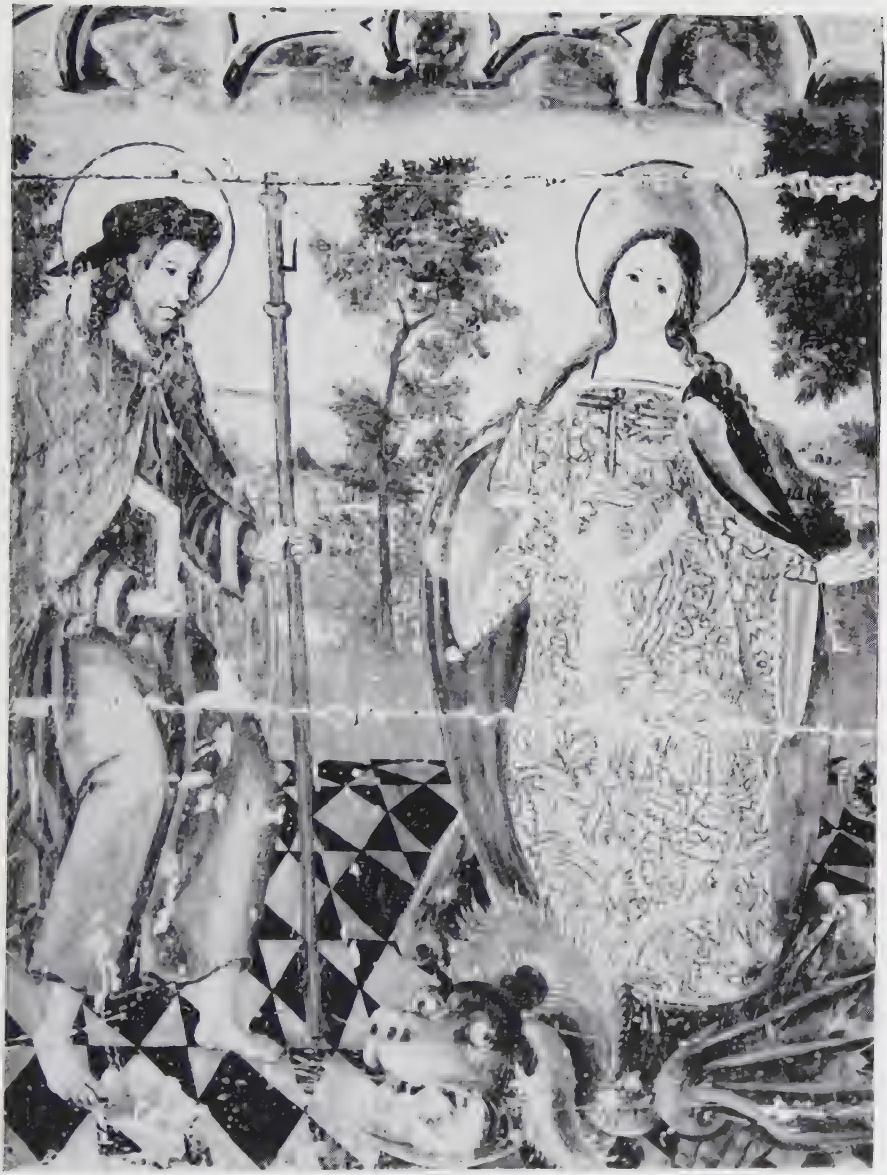

FIG. 147. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. STS. JAMES MAJOR AND MARGARET, SECTION OF PREDELLA. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, LÉRIDA
(*Photo. Mas*)

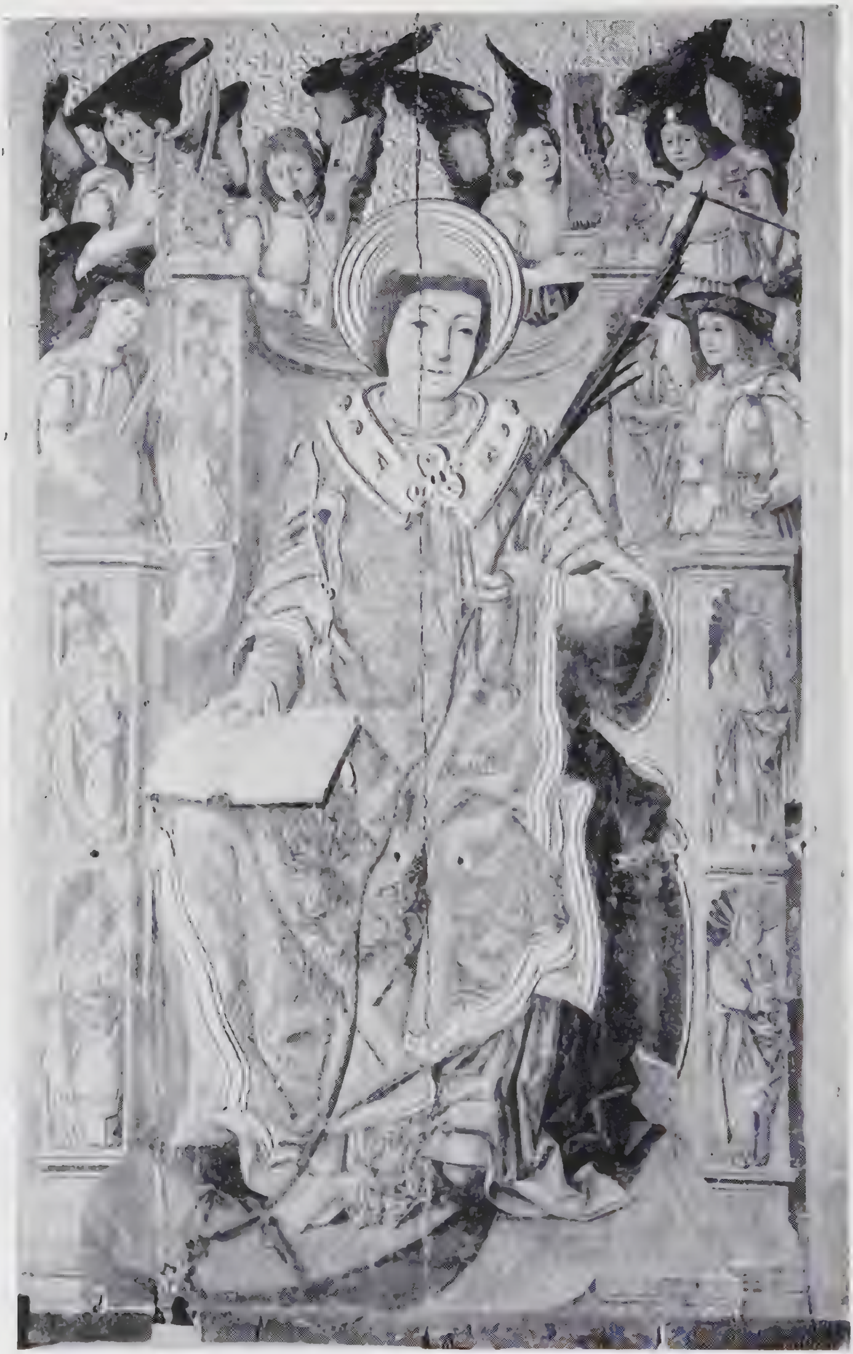

FIG. 148. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. ST. VINCENT.
DIOCESAN MUSEUM, LÉRIDA
(*Photo. Mas*)

the kind of old man used at Javierre for the St. Joseph. The embossed accents are no less conspicuous than in the retable that gives the painter his name; but the halo is now of the simple ringed sort, and the employment of raised stucco for the rendering of the design in the gold background, suggested here by the pattern of a brocade, implies a Catalan rather than an Aragonese artistic environment.[7]

A battered retable of St. John Baptist constitutes the third work in the Lérida Museum by the Javierre Master, but the record of its original location has been lost[8] (Fig. 149). The standing effigy of the Precursor at the centre is surmounted by the Crucifixion and flanked at the lower level by the episodes of his baptism of the Saviour and decollation and at the upper level by two scenes from the New Testament intimately connected with his own story, the Annunciation and Nativity of Christ. The evidence for the attribution is manifold. The composition for the Nativity very nearly repeats the rendering at Javierre, except that in the Lérida version, with most unusual iconography, St. Joseph actually holds the Child. The same type of old man, however, serves for the foster-father of Our Lord, and there is practically no variation in the treatment of the proclamation to the excited shepherds on a sloping hillside in the distance. The painter does not even bother to alter his ideas of the ox and the ass. Gabriel of the Annunciation is facially the same angel who stands at the left beside the central St. Eulalia in the Javierre retable, and the baptizing St. John belongs precisely to the class of man embodied in the St. James Minor of the Javierre predella. The unfortunate simpering expression of the St. Vincent in the Lérida Museum is likewise substituted for true piety on the countenance of the erect figure of the Precursor at the middle of the retable, who would, indeed, only have to lose his beard to turn out to be exactly the same person as the hallowed deacon. The Crucifixion is far from a duplication of the version in the separate predella of the Museum but remains entirely compatible with the Javierre Master's execution. His susceptibility to the old Catalan and Aragonese passion for lavish accentuation of paintings by embossed gold is now marked, in the principal compartment, by a retention of the designs of floral sunbursts that his immediate predecessors in this region, Pedro Despallargues and

---

[7] Vol. VIII, p. 9.

[8] Soldevila Faro, *op. cit.*, 28.

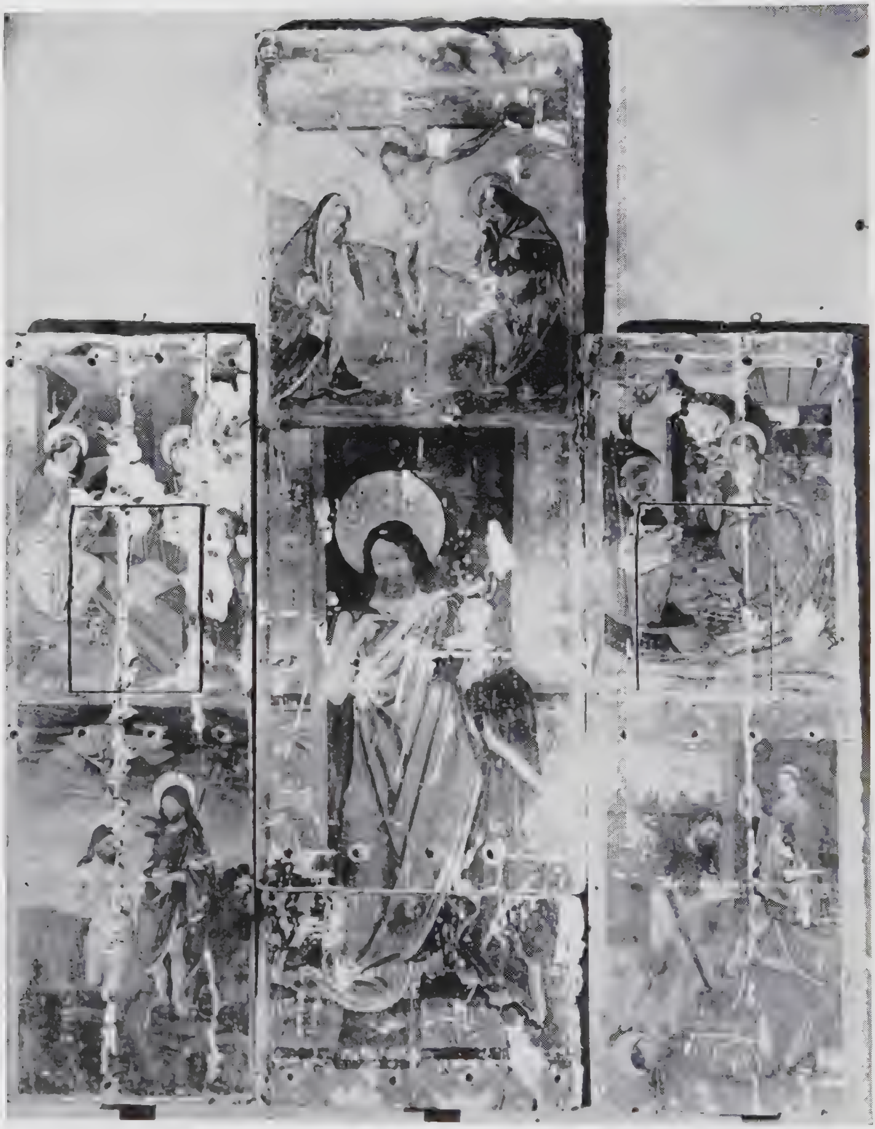

FIG. 149. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. RETABLE OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST. DIOCESAN MUSEUM, LÉRIDA
(*Photo. Mas*)

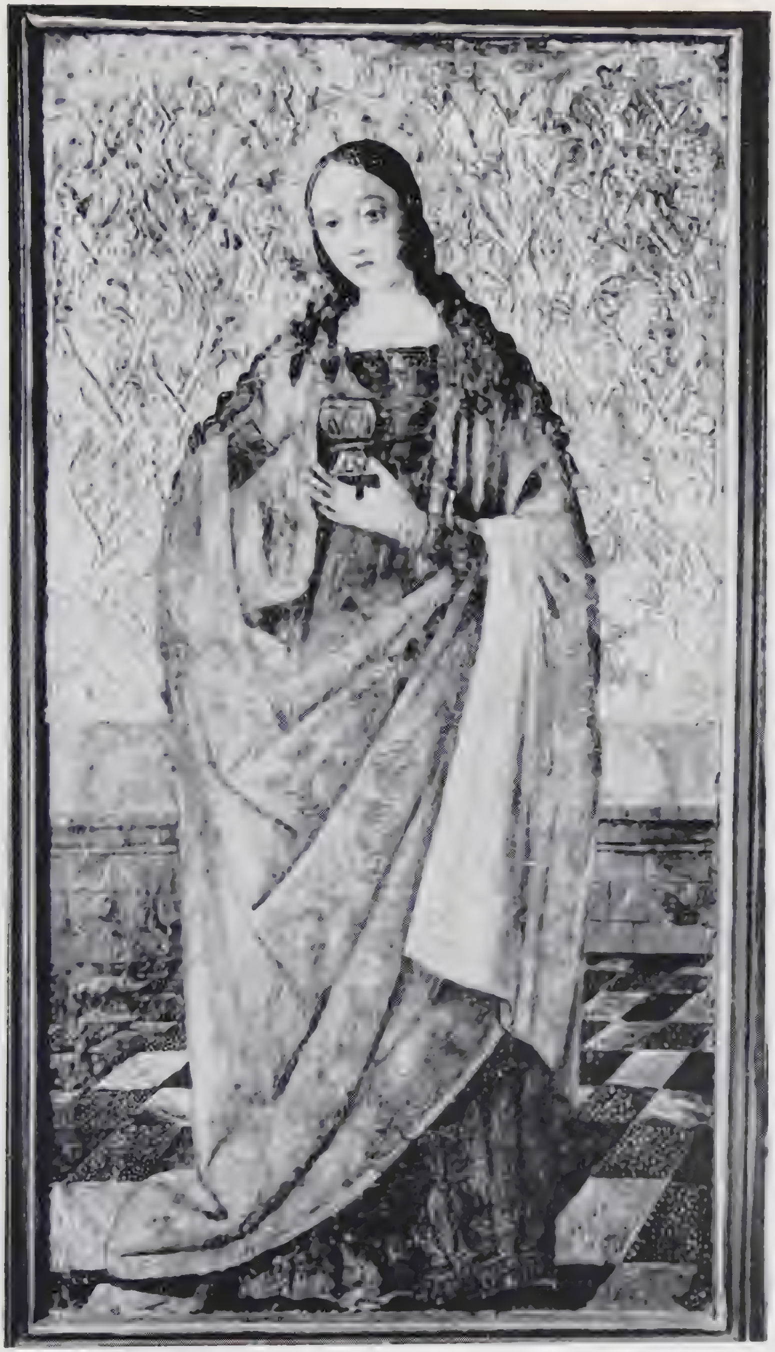

FIG. 150. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. ST. MARY MAGDALENE. MUSEUM, VICH

(*Photo. Mas*)

Pedro García de Benabarre,[9] had employed, and by an extension of the pattern to the central Baptist's halo.

The various aspects of the Javierre Master's modes are well summarized in a panel of the standing Magdalene, now in the Vich Museum [10] but once a principal compartment in an otherwise lost retable in an unascertained edifice at the town of Santa Coloma de Queralt in the extreme northern part of the province of Tarragona but on the edge of the province of Lérida, his stamping ground (Fig. 150). She incorporates a kind of feminine countenance, disposition of the hair, droop of the head, and arrangement of the drapery often employed by the Master and most nearly repeated in the St. Barbara of the predella in the Lérida Museum. The setting to the enthroned St. Vincent in this Museum provides only a somewhat less gorgeous counterpart to the Magdalene's embossed gold background.

Catalan affiliations for the Javierre Master are indicated by the presence of two of his panels in the Biblioteca-Museo Municipal at Tarrasa, since they would scarcely have entered this collection if they did not come from the immediate region. Manifestly deriving from a single retable or from companion retables, they depict the paired saints whom Huguet's altarpiece of 1460 proves to have been popular at Tarrasa,[11] Abdon and Sennen in one (Fig. 151) and Cosmas and Damian in the other, standing in front of brocaded fabrics which in turn hang before parapets of simple architecture of the Renaissance. In features, gaze of the eyes, and treatment of the hair Sts. Abdon and Sennen are the mates of the painter's youths, maidens, and angels, finding their closest counterparts perhaps in the boyish Magus at Javierre, the St. John of the Crucifixion in the Lérida predella, and the lower angel at the right above St. Vincent's throne. Corroboration and very cogent evidence for the attribution are provided by the repetition in the St. Damian of the flaccid stance, with sagging knees, that constitutes a glaring defect in the Santiago of the Lérida predella.

The Diocesan Museum at Solsona harbors a panel of the Dormition intimately related to the manner of the Javierre Master, although not attached to it by such absolutely tenacious bands as to substantiate an irrefragable attribution (Fig. 152). One of the reasons

---

[9] Vol. VII, pp. 244 and 286.

[10] No. 818, p. 101, of the old Catalogue. The dimensions are 136 centimetres in height by 76 in width.

[11] Vol. VII, pp. 52–56.

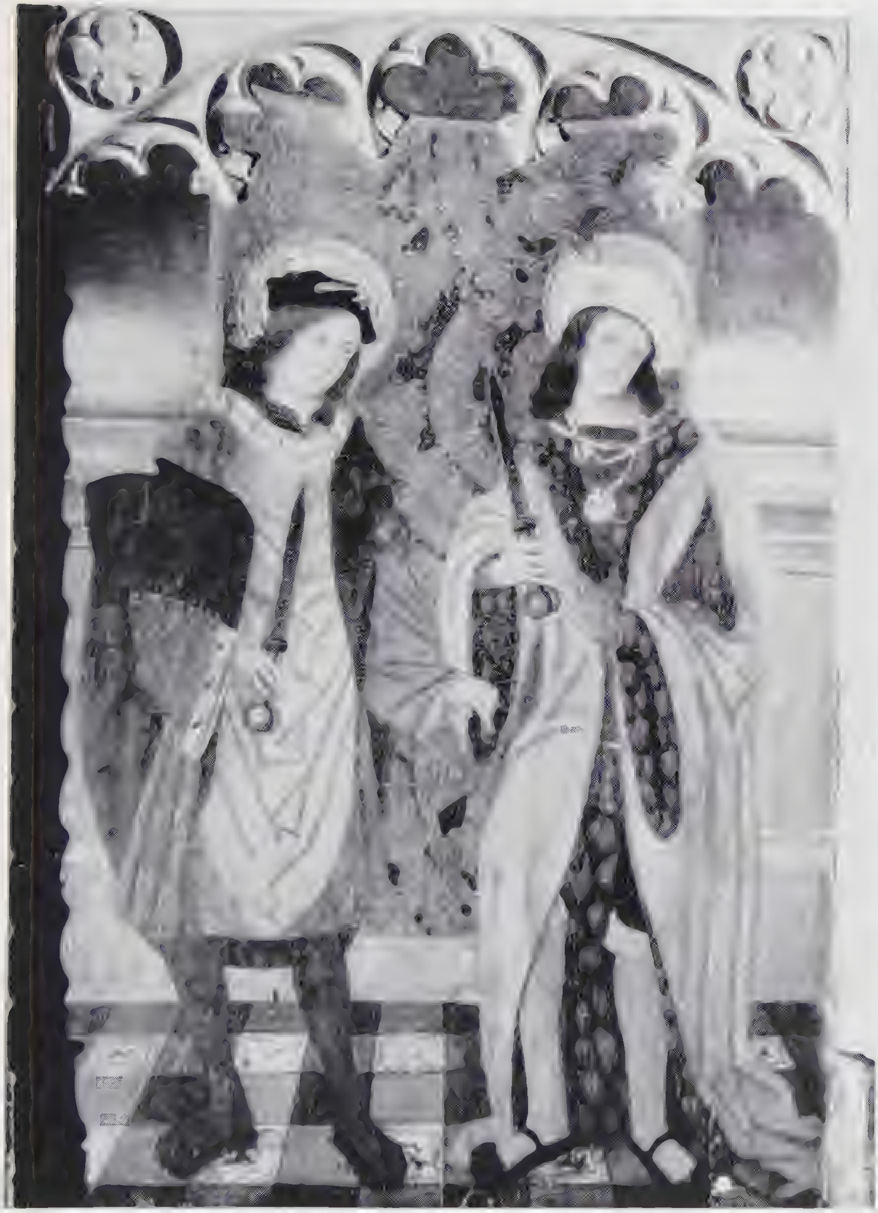

FIG. 151. THE JAVIERRE MASTER. STS. ABDON AND SENNEN. BIBLIOTECA-MUSEO MUNICIPAL, TARRASA
(*Photo. Mas*)

for listing the panel is that, through comparison, we are thus enabled to rescue from an alien classification a predella once in the Franck-Chauveau Collection, Paris. Rashly published by Jean Guiffrey and Pierre Marcel,[12] even despite the Catalan inscriptions, as of the nebulous school of Avignon, it marshals about the Christ of the Mass of St. Gregory between the Virgin and St. John pairs of saints in three-fourths length against a continuing parapet, exactly in the mode of the painter's forerunners on the frontier of Catalonia and Aragon, Pedro Despallargues and Pedro García de Benabarre. According to the frequent practice of these predecessors and as in the Master's predella in the Lérida Museum, a feminine saint is coupled with a masculine, reading from left to right, Agatha with Jerome, Barbara with Blaise, Margaret [13] with Augustine, and Catherine with the Baptist (Fig. 153), and their names are inscribed on the ledge beneath them. The predella obviously falls within exactly the same phase of the very early Renaissance, in which the ringed, embossed haloes still linger on, as the Solsona Dormition, and the resemblance, for instance, of St. John Baptist, even in the uncombed hair, to the second Apostle from the right in the Solsona panel might induce us to a belief in a unity of authorship; but a more discreet procedure is to enrol both the Dormition and the predella merely in the circle of the Javierre Master.

2. THE CANILLO MASTER (JUAN LLOBET OR PEDRO ALEGRET?)

The odds are about even in the question whether this artist, who translates the manner employed by such men as Forner and the Balaguer Master into capricious stylization, is identical with a painter, Juan Ramón Llobet, recorded as active in the same region, the parish [14] of Canillo in Andorra, from which derive two of our artist's extant works, and at the same general time when internal evidence shows that these works must have been created. Pujol [15] has pub-

---

[12] *La peinture française, les primitifs*, Paris, *c.* 1925, deuxième série, plates 46–47.

[13] Guiffrey and Marcel mistake Blaise for Paulinus and Margaret for Martha. The monster held captive by Margaret might easily be thought, instead of her dragon, Martha's *tarasque*, but the longer name of Margaret is plainly written beneath.

[14] The political divisions of Andorra are designated as parishes.

[15] P. Pujol y Tubáu in *Homenatge a Antonio Rubió i Lluch*, Barcelona, 1936, II, 469–470 and 483–485. See also J. M. Madurell in *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, IV (1946), 135 and 336–338. For the descent of Juan Llobet from the family of painters in the region named Gonsalbo, see Madurell, *ibid.*, 33. Cf. my vol. VIII, p. 644.

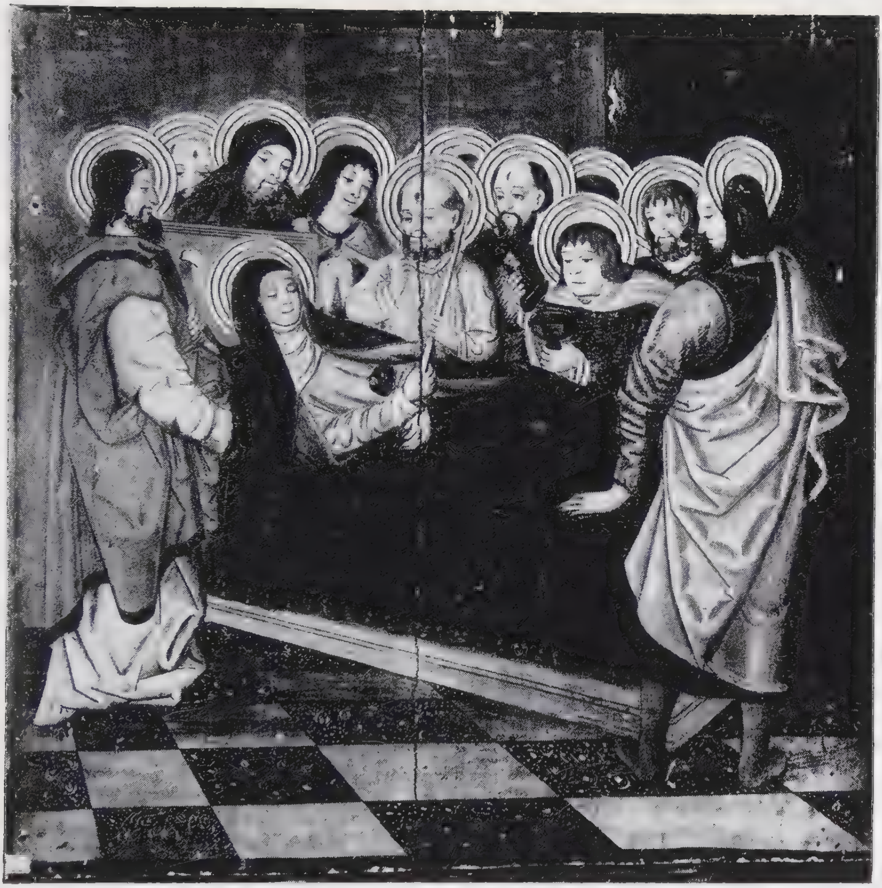

Fig. 152. CIRCLE OF THE JAVIERRE MASTER. DORMITION. EPISCOPAL MUSEUM, SOLSONA
(*Photo. Mas*)

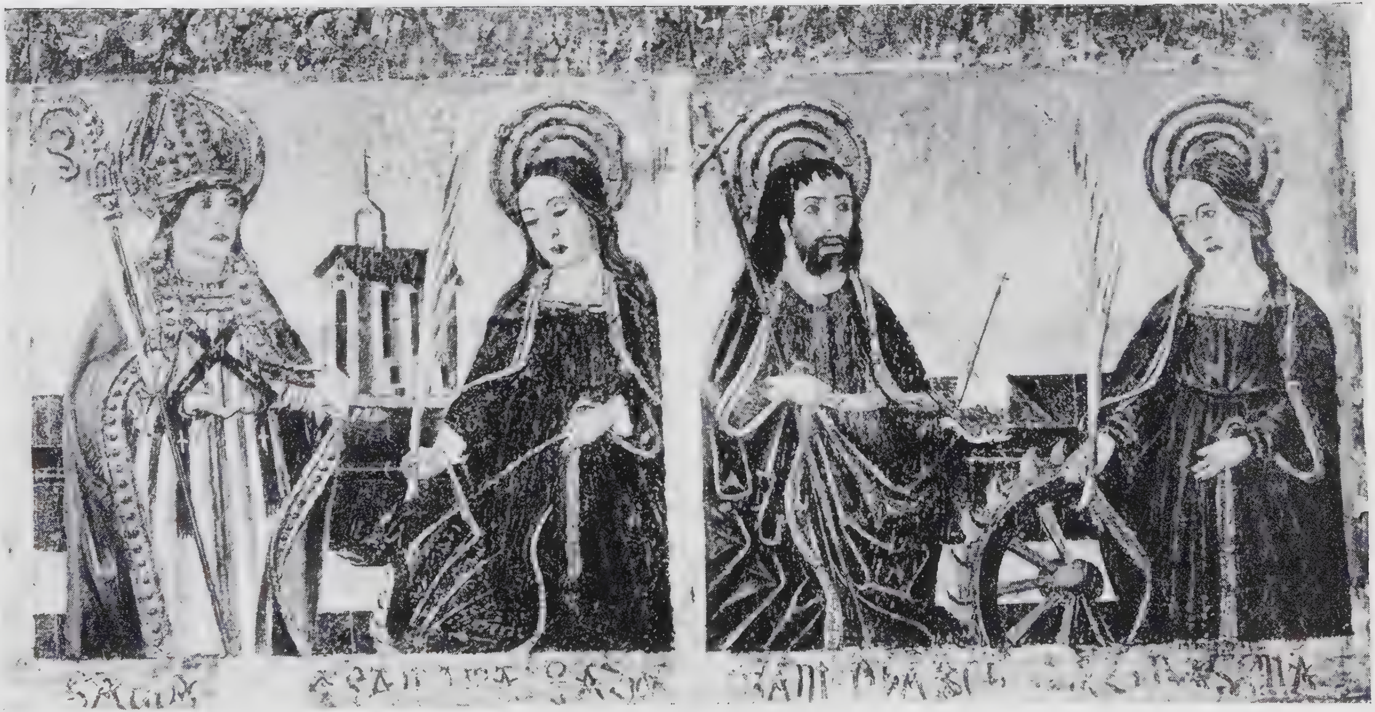

FIG. 153. CIRCLE OF THE JAVIERRE MASTER. SECTION OF PREDELLA.
FRANCK-CHAUVEAU COLLECTION, PARIS
(From "La peinture française, les primitifs" by Guiffrey and Marcel)

lished the contracts by which Llobet, residing at La Seo de Urgel, agreed on June 18, 1508, and again on August 2, 1510, to assume commissions at Canillo. It is believed by Pujol that both documents have to do with the same retable, on the supposition that Llobet for some reason did not carry out the first order and that therefore a new compact was necessary. If this is so, the documents can refer to neither of the extant retables, since, although in the first contract the subjects of the paintings are not listed, it is specifically stated in the second contract that the retable shall be under the invocation of St. Saturninus,[16] whereas one of the extant retables, from the church of San Juan de Caselles in the parish of Canillo, honors St. John the Evangelist and the other from the church of the village of Prats in the same parish is dedicated to St. Michael. If, however, as is quite possible, the first contract, dated in 1508, applies to an earlier work distinct from the retable of St. Saturninus, it might very well be the commission for the altarpiece of San Juan de Caselles or for that of Prats, thus demonstrating Llobet to be the author. The document of 1508 does not define the place for which the paintings were to be done more precisely than "Canillo," probably meaning the village's parish church which may then have been San Juan de Caselles rather than the edifice which now enjoys this privilege.[17] As a further argument for the recognition of Llobet in our Canillo Master, it could be urged that a small and remote rural district such as Canillo would not be likely to call into service two painters at the same general moment in its history, but scholarly honesty forbids us to make the equation until absolutely accurate proof is forthcoming. Moreover, we cannot rule entirely out of account for identification with the Canillo Master, the claims of a painter of Cervera, Pedro Alegret, to whose name, in a contract of October 2, 1519, divulged by the Catalan scholar, Durán y Sanpere,[18] the words *de Canillo* are appended, although nowhere else in the documents that tell of him. There were two painters of Cervera in the first half of the sixteenth century denominated Pedro Alegret, but despite the fact that the second, Pedro Alegret Muliner, is mentioned as early as

---

[16] Occurring in the document in a Catalan form, Cerni (= Serni), close to the French *Sernin*.

[17] See M. Font and P. Pujol y Casademont, *Andorra*, in the series of books on parts of Catalonia called *Album Meravella*, Barcelona, 1930, p. 33.

[18] In an article in *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, XI (1923), 89, 95, and 101.

1516, it is likely that the one connected with Canillo was the prior and more prominent of the twain. Durán suspects that the reason for the title *de Canillo* may be that the family originally hailed from Andorra, but it is just possible that the words are an honorific reference to a recent period of employment in the little republic. We have no means of substantiating the possibility of the equation of a Pedro Alegret with the Canillo Master, since none of the works assigned to him in the records is preserved. A panel of Sts. Cosmas and Damian now in the Archivo Municipal, Cervera, is documentarily proved to have been executed in 1573 by a Master Alegret,[19] a later member of the family than the Pedro Alegret de Canillo; and in any case the style places the panel in the very tardy Renaissance and is different from the Canillo Master's manner.

The retable in San Juan de Caselles was sold in whole or in part during or just before the Spanish civil war, and I have been unable to trace the present whereabouts of its sections. As it stood in the church, its central section was entirely occupied by a statue of St. John Evangelist under a lavish Gothic canopy, and the paintings were confined to the lateral divisions, the predella, and one door preserved from the pair beside the altar. In each of the lateral divisions there were four scenes from the life of St. John, arranged in pairs in the two lower tiers, and then a single scene covering the whole space, curved at its top, in the third and uppermost tier. The subjects in the two lower tiers at the right were the boiling of the Evangelist in oil and three of his visions as he sat on Patmos composing the Apocalypse, the first, of the Pantocrator with the two-edged sword in His mouth and the seven candlesticks in front of Him (Chapter I), next, of the Apostle's reception of the "little book" (Chapter X), and finally of the woman clothed with the sun (Chapter XII). It is witness to the wide dissemination of Dürer's prints in Catalonia that even a painter in so remote a corner as the northern part of the province and Andorra should have adapted, albeit freely, for the first two of the scenes from the Book of Revelation the German's compositions in his Apocalyptic series of woodcuts. One questions whether in the vision of the woman clothed with the sun he was indebted either to Dürer or to Schongauer's engraving of the subject. The representation in the continuous curving space at the right in the third tier of the retable appears to have been derived also from Revelation, but its theme remains obscure to me.[20] In the lowest tier at the left there could first be seen St. John resurrecting the bridegroom in the presence of the two rich renegades whose rods of gold and precious stones lay upon the ground; and then apparently his overthrow of the temple of Diana. Both panels in the second tier were partly ruined, but one of them seemed to represent the death of the two criminals by the instrumentality of the venom from which the Apostle proved immune. My guess for the subject of the single space in the third tier would be St. John demanding from the bishop an account of the young convert whom he had commended to the episcopal keeping but who had gone astray. The predella marshalled episodes of the Passion, the Flagellation, Christ before Pilate, the Via Dolorosa, Crucifixion, and Lamentation over the Dead Christ (Fig. 154), and the figure ornamenting the door was one of the traditional saints for this location, Peter.

---

[19] *Ibid.*, 107.

The style is that of a painter of respectable but not outstanding gifts, who, while retaining a number of qualities of the late mediaeval school, already cultivates to a rather surprising degree the elongations, twists, and whimsicalities of mannerism. Although not a great technician, he possesses at least one of the indispensable qualities of a true artist, the creation of types of humanity who are all his own and so easily recognizable as to facilitate the task of the student in attributing to him other works. If the Canillo Master was Juan Llobet or Pedro Alegret, the surnames would make of him a Catalan, but, wherever he came from and whatever his training, he still sought the serene beauty of the mediaeval painting of Catalonia in his feminine and youthful masculine types. The embossings are renounced; but his panels continue to be bright with golden fabrics, and the predella is ablaze with the old gold backgrounds, incised with a bold pattern of flamboyant brocade. We shall find in his various productions evidence of considerable originality of mind, especially in iconographic neologisms. The retable of San Juan de Caselles shows that he even refused to follow Dürer's compositions slavishly, abjuring, for instance, the representation of St. John as actually devouring the "little book," in which the German conforms literally to the Apocalyptic

---

[20] Since I have never seen the retable and, except for a few photographs of details, have to rely upon an inadequate reproduction of the whole structure, there are a few of the scenes that I cannot with surety identify.

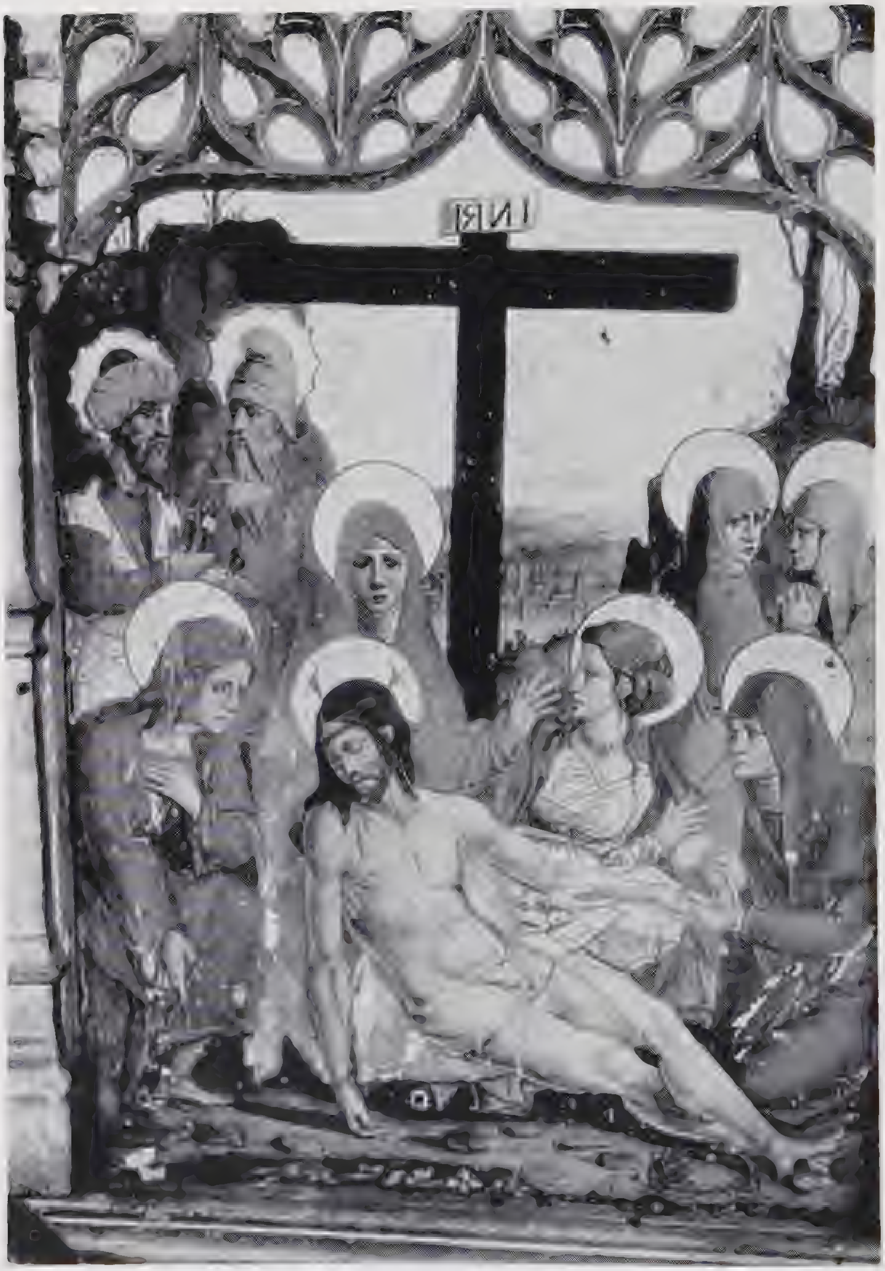

FIG. 154. THE CANILLO MASTER. LAMENTATION OVER THE DEAD CHRIST, SECTION OF RETABLE. CHURCH OF SAN JUAN DE CASELLES, CANILLO, ANDORRA
(*Photo. Mas*)

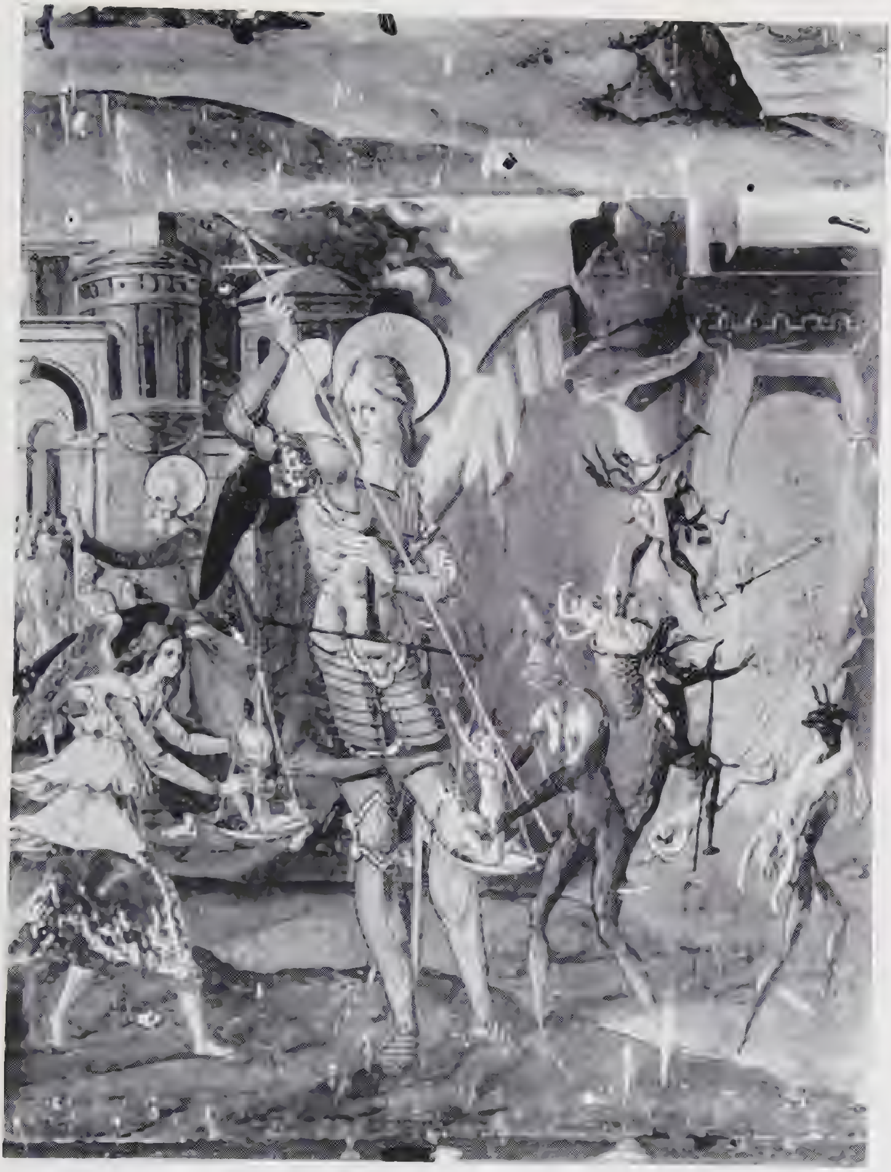

FIG. 155. THE CANILLO MASTER, ST. MICHAEL AS WEIGHER OF SOULS, SECTION OF RETABLE FROM PRATS, ANDORRA
GALERIAS COSTA, PALMA DE MALLORCA
(*Photo Mas*)

text. To the style itself of Dürer he owed little or nothing, since his nature and the Catalan environment made him shrink from the Teuton's harshness of types and draperies.

The further advance towards mannerism would imply a later date for the Master's retable of St. Michael once in the church at Prats in the parish of Canillo but last seen by me in the possession of the dealing firm, the Galerías Costa at Palma de Mallorca; and the inferior quality of some passages probably means the intrusion of his shop. As it stood in the church, it resembled the retable of San Juan de Caselles in the reservation of the centre for a statue of the archangel. The two panels in the upper tier of paintings display the Monte Gargano episode and the subsequent appearance of St. Michael to the bishop of the region. At the right in the lower tier the two subjects are the archangel's rescue of the woman and her child from the floods of Mont St. Michel and (its only occurrence in art known to me) his cure of the fever-stricken Aquilinus at a place near Constantinople. The pair of corresponding panels at the left depict the combat of St. Michael and his companions with the devils and his weighing of souls while St. Peter in the background receives at the gate of heaven those whom the archangel has found worthy to be numbered among the redeemed (Fig. 155). As at San Juan de Caselles, the predella unfolds the Passion, in this case in the episodes of the Betrayal, Christ before Pilate, the Crucifixion, Lamentation, and Entombment.

By reason of the individuality of the Canillo Master's types, his right to the parentage of the Prats retable is so self-evident that it will not be necessary to bore the reader with the usual wearisome amassment of the proof. A comparison of the Christ in the Lamentation with the same figure in this theme in the retable from San Juan de Caselles will serve to illustrate the increase of manneristic attenuation, and the St. Michael in the psychostasy betrays a tendency even to a *préciosité* of posture and gesture. A piquantly original touch in the latter scene is the representation of the door of hell as if decorated with demoniac subjects, but, on the other hand, in the predella the compositions of San Juan de Caselles are practically duplicated in the instances where the themes are the same, Christ before Pilate, the Crucifixion, and the Lamentation. Two loud patterns, different from each other, are employed to ornament the gold backgrounds in the episodes of the Passion. It is particularly in the compartment of the

Monte Gargano story that the intrusion of an assistant seems to be perceptible.

The activity of the Canillo Master in the northeastern section of the peninsula bordering upon France is signalized also by a retable, which fortunately survived the civil war, over the high altar in the church of S. Pedro at Villanova, near Benasque in the province of Huesca but practically in Catalonia (Fig. 156). The central division is reserved for sculpture contemporary with the paintings, a seated effigy of the Apostle to whom the church is dedicated and above it the Crucifixion. The four paintings on a line with the effigy represent the angelic delivery of St. Peter from prison, the decapitation of St. Paul, the stoning of St. Stephen, and his burial in the field of Gamaliel; and the two at the upper level beside the Crucifixion unfold the scenes of the Annunciation and Visitation. The bust of the Saviour on the face of the tabernacle is flanked in the predella at the left by a panel of St. Michael and at the right by a compartment with two canonized women. The painted doors at the sides of the altar are also preserved, displaying the standing forms of Sts. Peter and Paul, the regular themes for such spots, the latter conceived very differently from his representation in the panel of his martyrdom above. In the narrative compartment devoted to St. Peter, the *motif* of liberation is consigned to the background where behind a grating he is being aroused by the angel in the midst of the supernatural illumination mentioned in the twelfth chapter of the Book of the Acts, and the foreground is occupied by the previous episode of the guards conducting him to his cell. The background thus conforms to Raphael's treatment of this part of the composition in the Stanze of the Vatican with which it is not impossible that the Canillo Master, mediately or immediately, was familiar. The Visitation provides an extremely emotional instance of the intensity of Spanish piety, modifying also the ordinary iconography of the theme so as to bring St. Elizabeth to her knees.[21] The ledge beneath the two episodes of St. Stephen is inscribed with a slight modification of the fifty-sixth verse of the account of his death in the seventh chapter of Acts, "Video coelos apertos, et Jesum stantem a dextris Dei." Under the pair of panels on the other side the delivery of St. Peter from prison is summarized in a sentence which derives from some other source than the Bible and in which I can decipher with certainty no more than

[21] See vol. VIII, p. 234.

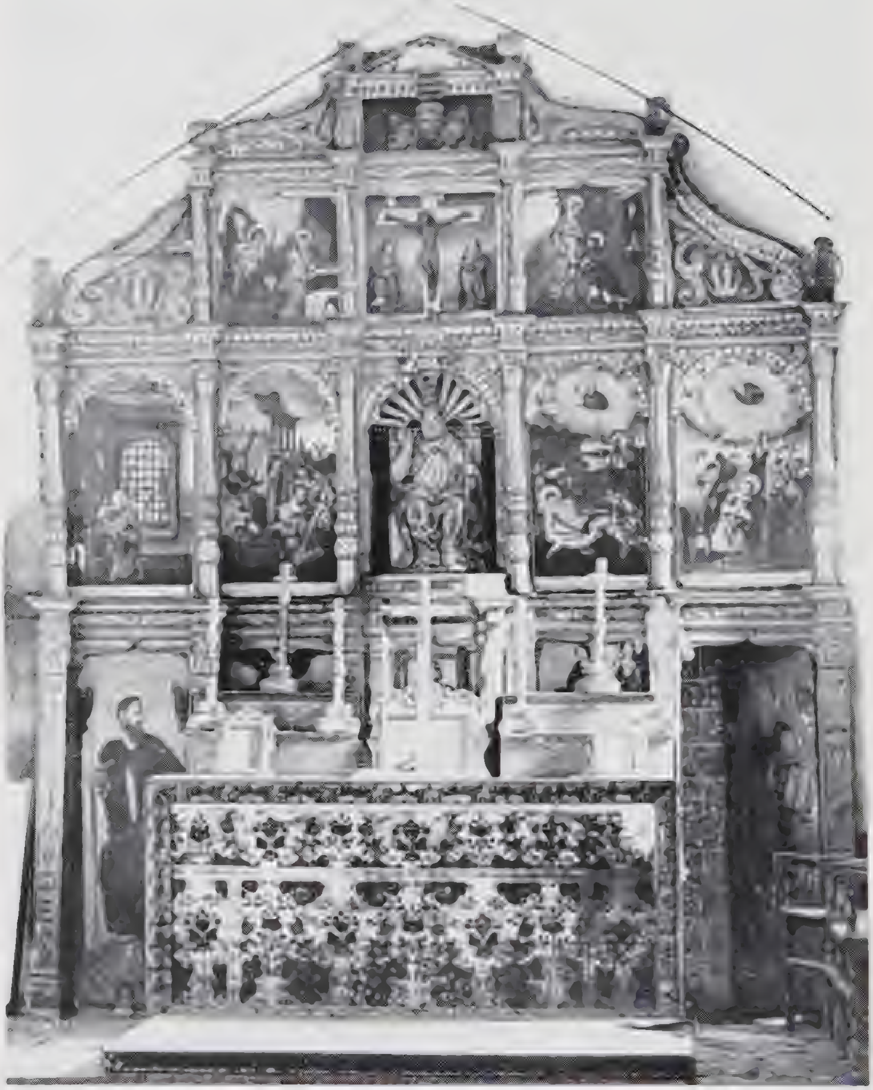

FIG. [illegible]. THE CANILLO MASTER. RETABLE OF ST. PETER
PARISH CHURCH, VILLANOVA
(*Photo. Mas*)

the Apostle's name and the words, "Catenarum (spelled, *chatenarum*) laqueos rupit."

The authorship really needs no demonstration for anyone who has studied the Andorra paintings. The St. Paul of the door, for example, incorporates a recurrent, peculiar type in these paintings, as in the Saviour and the soldier behind Him in the scene before Pilate from San Juan de Caselles, and the Virgin of the Visitation belongs to the class of women illustrated by the Magdalene in the Entombment of the Prats altarpiece. The Master maintains in the doors his affection for the old, ostentatious tooling of gold backgrounds.

He was unmistakably the creator also of a retable of St. Margaret which used to exist in the church at Lascuarre just north of Benabarre in the province of Huesca, again on the frontier of Catalonia, but was burned in the civil war (Fig. 157). Her effigy, standing upon the dragon, occupied the principal compartment and was surmounted by the Crucifixion, treated more simply than in his Andorra altarpieces. The four scenes from her life at the sides were her arrest amidst her nurse's sheep, her refusal to worship the idol, her flagellation as she hung from her hair, and her final decapitation. The grounds for the attribution are once more perfectly obvious, but, since we should perhaps not have expected the Master's activity at such a distance from La Seo de Urgel, which may have been his residence at least for a part of his life, I will trespass upon the reader's patience by itemizing a few of the most unescapable proofs. If one sets the photographs of the works from Canillo and Lascuarre side by side, he will at once find all the types reiterated back and forth. The conception of both older and younger men does not vary from retable to retable; the St. John of the Lascuarre Crucifixion is the same youth whose life is set forth in the altarpiece from San Juan de Caselles; and St. Margaret conforms to one of the Master's favorite sorts of women, embodied, for example, in the Magdalene in the Caselles Lamentation and the representation of the Virgin at Villanova. He is perhaps not yet so convinced a mannerist as at Prats, and behind the central effigy of the virgin martyr he still abides by the tradition of a gold background, here incised with a checkered pattern.

To my own attributions to the Canillo Master, Angulo[22] has re-

---

[22] *Archivo español de arte*, XVII (1944), 330, n. 1. I have not been able to obtain even photographs of certain works that Angulo ascribes to him in private collections at Barcelona, five scenes from the lives of Christ and the Virgin in the possession of the Mateu family and a decollation of the Baptist belonging to C. Rodríguez Andreu.

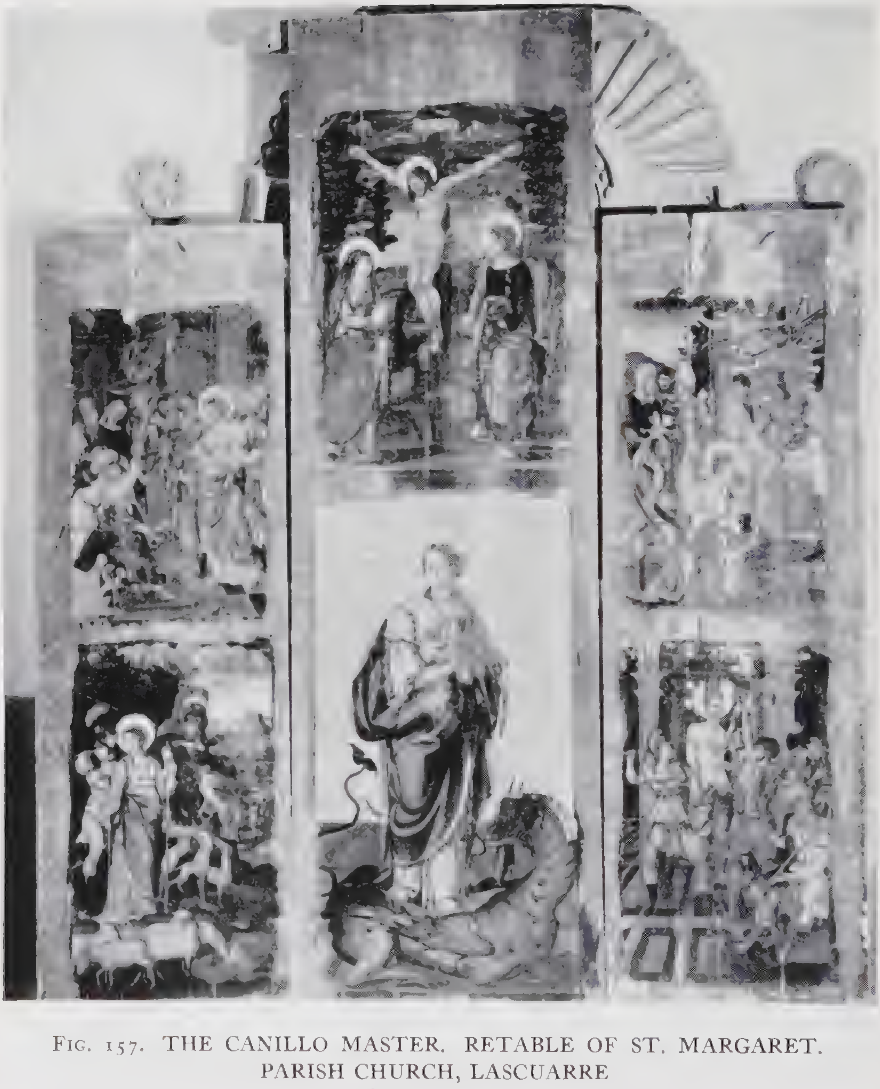

Fig. 157. THE CANILLO MASTER. RETABLE OF ST. MARGARET. PARISH CHURCH, LASCUARRE
(*Photo. Mas*)

cently added a number of other productions, although devoting himself to the subject quite independently of me. The most important is a work that blessedly escaped destruction in the war, the retable over the high altar of the parish church at Caldas de Malavella,[23] south of Gerona, which causes him to give the artist the name of the Caldas Master; but I prefer to keep my original designation as connected with achievements that perhaps may some day prove his real appellation to have been Juan Llobet. The retable has the further importance of extending the painter's activity for us from the distant confines of Catalonia to the vicinity of the capital itself, Barcelona. The Virgin is the sacred personage honored, and the scenes included are the Annunciation (not much varied from the rendering at Villanova), Nativity, Epiphany (Fig. 158), Purification, Flight into Egypt, Pentecost, and Assumption. The surmounting Crucifixion is almost a replica of the rendering at Lascuarre, and one of the doors beside the altar also remains, displaying an effigy of St. Paul, in which, however, the Master reveals his elasticity by a treatment diverse from that which he employed for this Apostle in the same spot at Villanova. A like inventiveness is embodied in his modification of the ordinary iconography of the Purification, just as in the Villanova retable he altered somewhat the conception of St. Peter's delivery from prison. We have often noted in these volumes that, as in the Caldas de Malavella panel, the Spaniards frequently represented the Virgin in the Purification on her knees, but with much originality the Canillo Master depicts her as actually engaged in offering the basket of doves and the Child as leaning forth from the arms of the priest to receive and bless them. At Caldas de Malavella, indeed, he reveals a true painter's interest in several technical aspects of his art. In the Nativity and Epiphany he quite anticipates Jacopo Bassano's eery, nocturnal effects, as we might have expected from the weird imagination that he in general exhibits. Both of these sections even exhibit experiments in spatial problems, entirely praiseworthy despite the fact that he has not quite mastered the difficulties of perspective. In the Umbrian way, he creates behind the actors a middle ground consisting of a piece of building foreshortened inward towards a distant arch that intervenes before the landscape which constitutes the background.

---

[23] The sections of the retable were preserved during the war by being brought to Barcelona, but they have now been restored to their home.

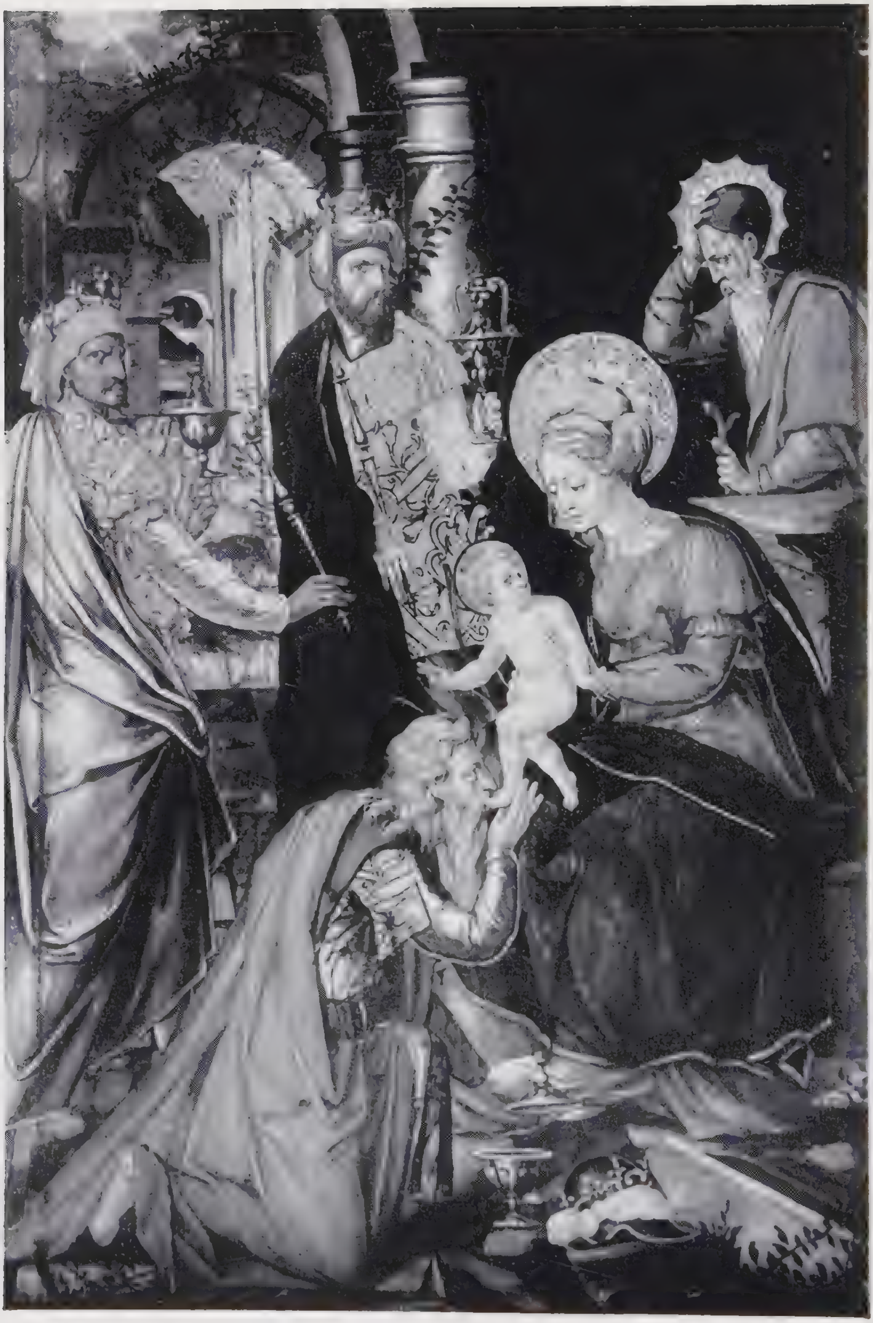

Fig. 158. THE CANILLO MASTER. EPIPHANY, SECTION OF RETABLE.
PARISH CHURCH, CALDAS DE MALAVELLA
(*Photo. Mas*)

3. The School of the Canillo Master, Especially the Saneja Master

The style of the Canillo Master was so pronounced in its traits that it attracted imitators on the northern border of Catalonia. The high altar of the church in the hamlet of Saneja, just west of Puigcerdá, is decorated with a retable so close to his modes that it is not even impossible that he himself executed some passages, turning over the lion's share, however, to an assistant. Glorifying St. Vincent, to whom the church is dedicated, it displays in its central compartment his carved image, according to a practice followed in several of the Canillo Master's altarpieces, and resort is made to sculpture also for a few other parts of the structure. The paintings consist, first, of four scenes from the story of St. Vincent in the main body of the retable, his arraignment, torture on the *eculeus,* roasting on the gridiron (an ordeal that he as well as St. Lawrence suffered), and the casting of his corpse into the sea, weighted by the millstone (Fig. 159). Four painted saints combine with sculpture to adorn the *guardapolvos,* and the whole predella is also rendered in paint, with subjects of further standing figures of sacred personages. Again only one of the painted doors of the retable is preserved, but at my hurried visit to the church in 1928 I failed to tabulate not only whether it depicted Peter or Paul but also the identifications of the saints of the *guardapolvos* and predella.

Among the elements nearest to the Canillo Master's own fashions are such types in the scene of the casting into the sea as the turbaned old man, who resembles the Joseph of Arimathaea holding Christ's head in the Prats Entombment, and the profile next to the left, which recalls, for instance, the soldier behind the Saviour in the episode before Pilate in the Caselles altarpiece. The virgin martyr at the extreme left in the predella falls within an oft recurring class of young women in the Canillo Master's output, illustrated by the representations of St. Margaret at Lascuarre. The executioner at the right of the *eculeus* possesses the fierceness of glance that the Canillo Master cultivates sometimes even in persons whose emotions would not naturally suggest it. The bit of landscape behind the attempt to submerge St. Vincent's body features the sort of clump of jagged rocks that, as in the Monte Gargano episode in the Prats retable and the arrest of St. Margaret at Lascuarre, we are likely to descry

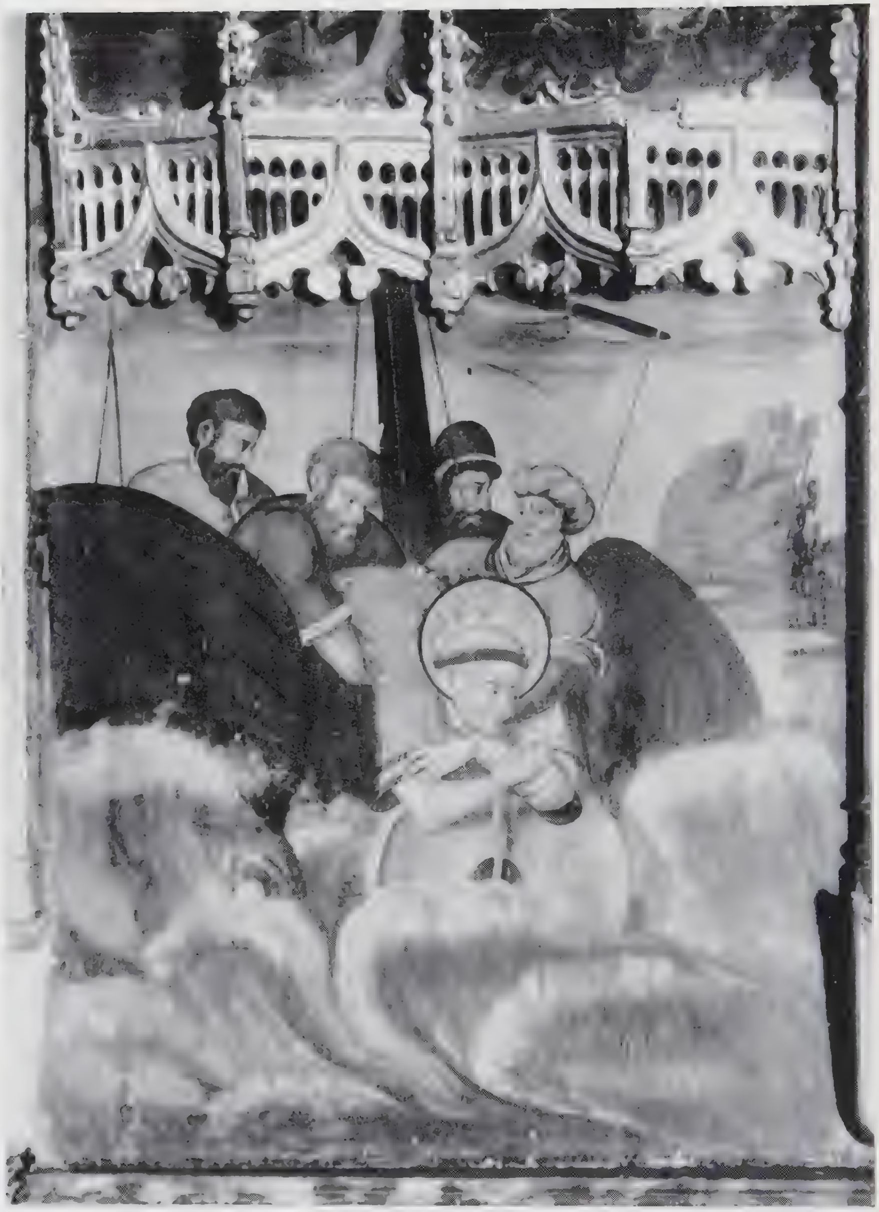

FIG. 159. THE SANEJA MASTER. ST. VINCENT'S BODY CAST INTO THE SEA, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, SANEJA
(*Photo. Mas*)

in the Canillo Master's settings. Nevertheless, my own ultimate opinion is that the Saneja altarpiece was wholly the work rather of a very faithful follower of the Canillo Master, somewhat less manneristically whimsical than his inspirer and not without solid, provincial ability.

To this follower we must give a name, the Saneja Master, because with certainty or probability other works can be assigned to him. A retable to which the word "certainty" should be applied decorates the altar of the *ermita,* San Román de les Bones, near Encamp, in Andorra, the frescoes from the apse of which, dated in the twelfth century, were long since removed and have passed from the Plandiura Collection, Barcelona, into the Museum of Catalan Art in the city.[24] Set in an unusually large, heavy, and elaborate Plateresque frame, the paintings naturally have to do with the patron of the *ermita,* St. Romanus, who enjoyed so wide a cult in Catalonia (Fig. 160). Enthroned in the central compartment, he is placed between four narrative scenes, his arrest, indictment, the rain miraculously extinguishing the fire in which it was intended that he and his youthful, pious comartyr should be incinerated, and his death by strangulation as the executioner, having bound him to a tree, climbs above him to enwrap his neck with the fatal scarf. Thus, with unexpected restraint, the artist has spared us the most distinctive but hideous episode in his life, the extraction of his tongue, upon which the colleagues of the Saneja Master were morbidly so prone to dwell.[25] The predella consists of half-lengths of the eucharistic Christ between an Apostolado.

To be convinced of the unity of authorship with the Saneja retable, one need do little more than observe the remarkable similarity, not only in head but also in modelling in chiaroscuro, between the central St. Romanus and St. Vincent on the *eculeus,* and the type of the latter is virtually repeated, though more dimly seen, in the youth at the extreme right in the scene of the arraignment. A Morellian peculiarity of the Master is his predilection for high foreheads, as in the St. Vincent brought to trial and the St. Romanus under arrest and confronting the prefect Asclepiades. The St. Paul paired with St.

---

[24] See my vol. IV, p. 491, and W. W. S. Cook and J. Gudiol Ricart, *Pintura é imaginería románicas,* the sixth volume of the series *Ars Hispaniae,* Barcelona, 1950, p. 70.

[25] For St. Romanus and his iconography, see especially my vols. VII, pp. 587 and 608, and VIII, p. 748.

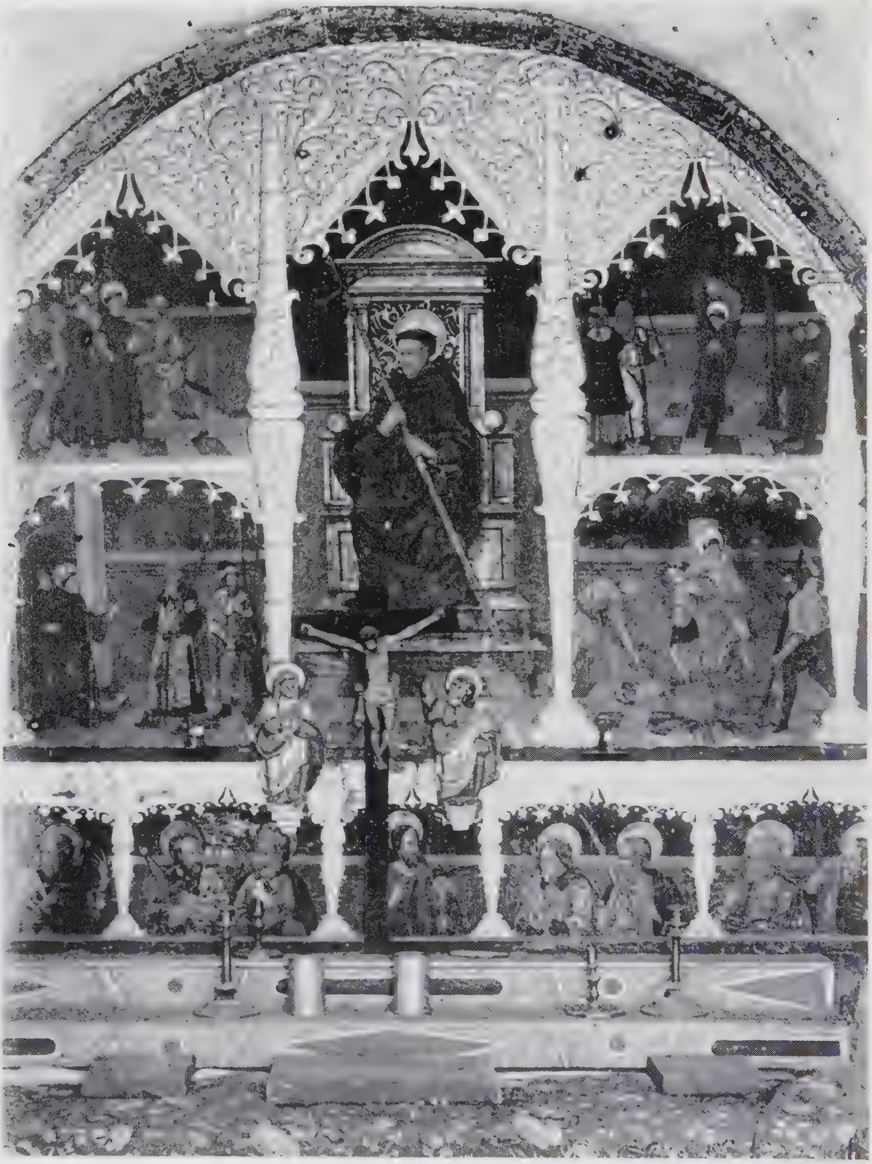

Fig. 160. THE SANEJA MASTER. RETABLE OF ST. ROMANUS. ERMITA OF SAN ROMÁN DE LES BONES, ANDORRA
(*Photo. Mas*)

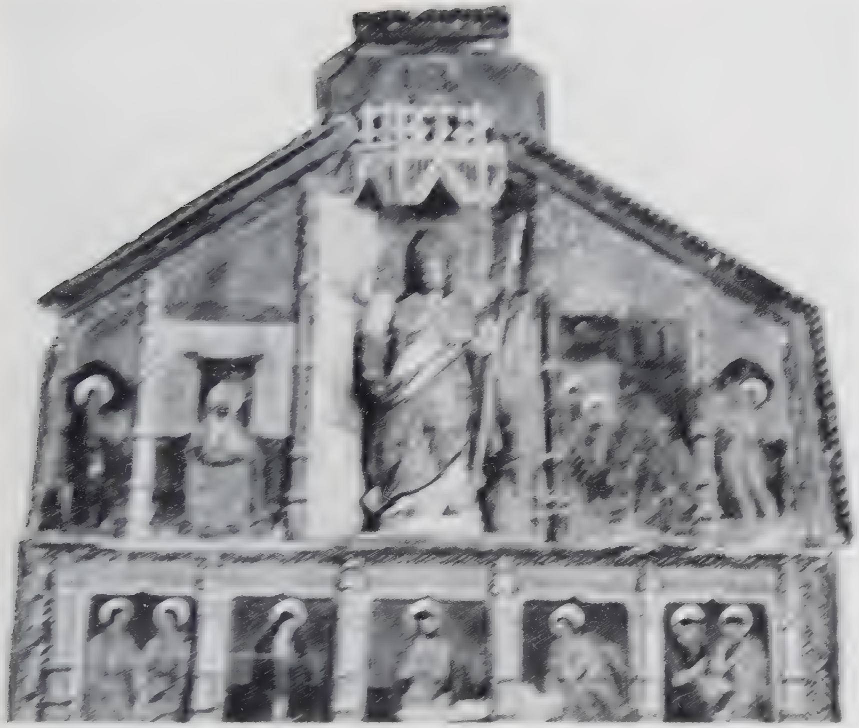

FIG. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Peter in the predella at San Román de les Bones is not unlike, in countenance, beard, and dishevelled hair, the man facing us in the left background among the spectators of St. Vincent's torture on the rack, and we should remark also the resemblance in the figuration of the pavement in the compartment of St. Vincent's indictment and in all the sections of the other altarpiece where St. Romanus is depicted, although the pattern is not confined to the Saneja Master.

With some plausibility he may be set down as responsible for another retable, the one over the high altar of the church in the village of Valcebollère, very near Puigcerdá but on the French side of the border (Fig. 161). In a document of 1565, dissolving the partnership of the painters, José Brell, Juan Perles, and Antonio Peytaví, it is stated that they had orders for three retables in the municipality of Osséja,[26] and, since Valcebollère was then a part of this municipality, one of these retables may well be the work that now concerns us. If such was the case, the author cannot be Peytaví, whose somewhat different manner we know,[27] and we possess no securely documented production of Brell or Perles to enable us to control the possibility that either was the painter whom we seek. It is interesting to note that Juan Perles came from Peralada in the province of Gerona, thus cementing the relationship of the art of Roussillon and Cerdagne to the rest of Catalonia.[28]

The centre of the retable is now occupied by a statue of St. Hilary, dating from the eighteenth century, but the other sections are the paintings that concern us. Above him is a pinnacle of the blessing Eternal Father, and at his sides are panels of St. Anthony Abbot, a seated canonized bishop (the same as in the central niche?),[29] the Epiphany, and St. Sebastian. The predella aligns, about Christ of the Passion, the sorrowing Virgin and St. John Evangelist and at the extremes coupled saints, on the left Justus and Pastor (?) [30] and on the right Cosmas and Damian. The most persuasive detail for the attribution is the exact repetition, in the Saviour in the predella, and to a somewhat lesser extent in the St. Damian, of the blasphemously

---

[26] Marcel Durliat, *Arts anciens du Roussillon, peinture*, Perpignan, 1954, p. 164; Pierre Vidal, *Histoire de la ville de Perpignan*, Paris, 1897, p. 474; and Jean Capeille, *Dictionnaire de biographies roussillonnaises*, Perpignan, 1914, pp. 77 and 477.

[27] See below, p. 420.

[28] See below, p. 395.

[29] Durliat, *op. cit.*, 164, so believes.

[30] See my vol. VII, p. 777.

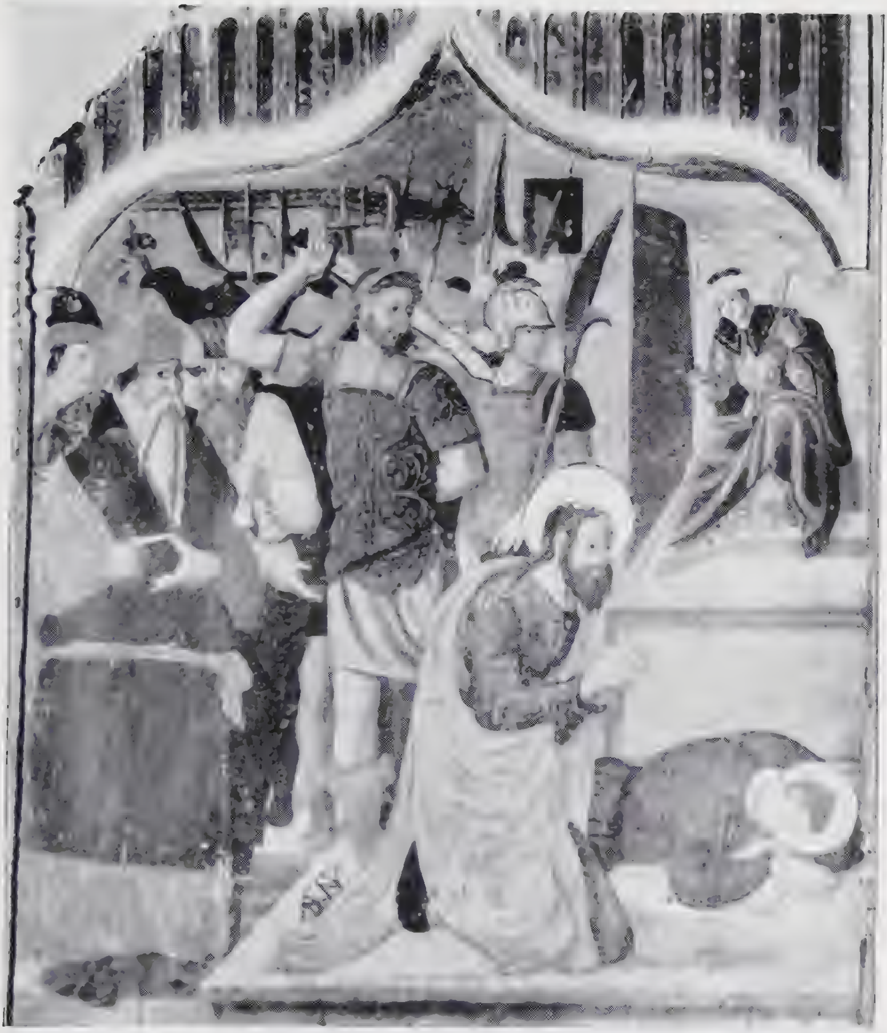

FIG. 162. SCHOOL OF THE CANILLO MASTER. DECAPITATION OF ST. JAMES MAJOR AND JOSIAS, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, NAHUJA

(*Photo. Mas*)

roguish, outward glance of the St. Vincent on the *eculeus* at Saneja. It should be observed, furthermore, that the St. John in the predella betrays the ugly profile that mars the child on the pyre with St. Romanus in the retable in Andorra. Other analogies could also be singled out, as between the St. Joseph in the Epiphany and the man at the left in the Saneja scene of the millstone or between the Sts. Justus and Pastor and, in the episode of the *eculeus,* the youth partly hidden by the executioner's arm at the right. The evidence provided by the identity in the figuration of the haloes at Saneja must also be added, not to speak of the reappearance, in the Epiphany, of the design in the pavement that the Master liked.

A very similar style to that of the Saneja Master but so much ruder as practically to forestall a question of his authorship emerges in four panels of the story of St. James Major, all that remains of a retable, in the church of the village of Nahuja, now in France just across the border from Puigcerdá and a very short distance east of Bourg-Madame. The subjects are the rarely represented scene from the New Testament in which the mother of Sts. James and John asks Our Lord for their preëminence in His kingdom, the double decapitation of St. James and his recent convert, Josias (Fig. 162), the carting of his body by bulls into Queen Lupa's palace, and his posthumous miracle wrought for the unjustly hanged son of the German pilgrim.

Angulo [31] assigns to a pupil of the Canillo Master an Epiphany in the parish church of Barruera (in the valley of Bohí in the northern part of the province of Lérida, west of Sort), and I believe that I am right in discerning the same hand in another panel in the edifice depicting the decollation of the Baptist.[32] I take it that he finds the evidence for the discipleship under the Canillo Master in the masculine types, especially such a head as that of the kneeling Magus (Fig. 163), but the craft of the author approaches so dangerously close to the untutored performance of a mere village artist that it is scarcely worth while to labor the question of whether or not the

---

[31] *Archivo español de arte,* XVII (1944), 330, n.1.

[32] Since I know the two panels only in photographs of the Mas Archive, I cannot say whether, as the nature of the bits of the carved frames included in the reproductions would seem to indicate, they were merely compartments of retables which existed at least until the Spanish civil war but were not further photographed. The variation in the figuration of the carvings implies, although not surely, derivation from two retables, one of Christ or the Virgin and the other of the Baptist, instead of a single retable comprehensive in its dedications.

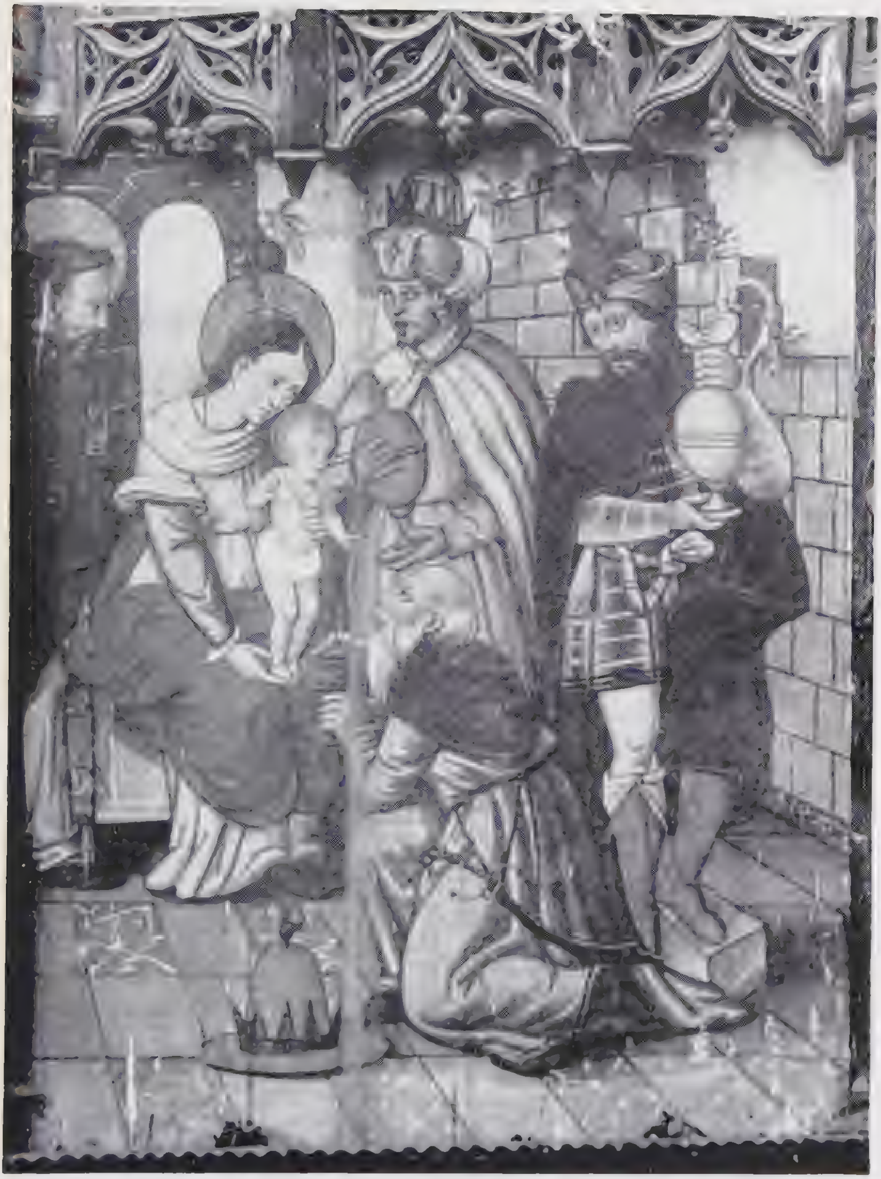

FIG. 163. SCHOOL OF THE CANILLO MASTER. EPIPHANY. PARISH CHURCH, BARRUERA
(*Photo. Mas*)

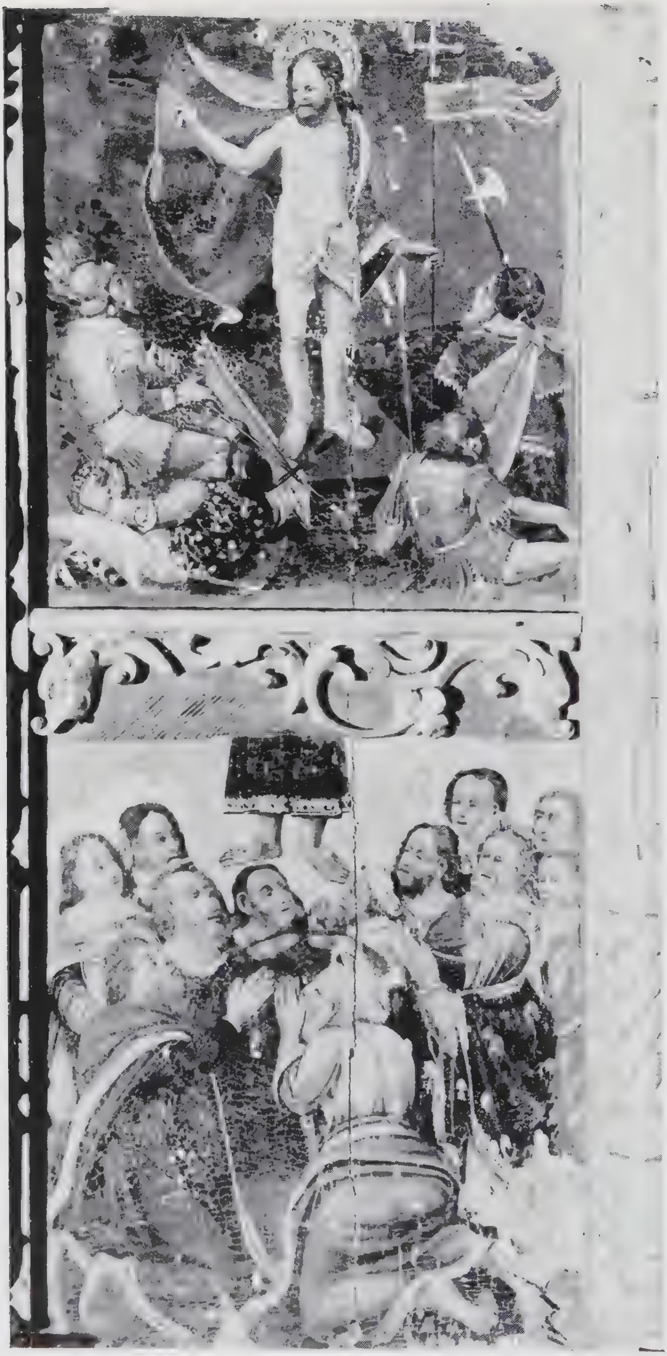

Fig. 164. THE SON MASTER. RESURRECTION (PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, LÉRIDA?) AND ASCENSION (CLARAMUNT COLLECTION, BARCELONA)

(*Photo. Mas*)

Canillo Master tried to make something of him. Certain it is that he is not identical with the painters of Saneja and Nahuja, both of whom, despite their limited capacities, are his superiors.

4. The Son Master

Another purveyor during the early Renaissance to the pious trade in western and northern Catalonia was a painter whom we may designate as the Son Master on the basis of his most extensively preserved monument, the remains of a retable that during the civil war were taken for safe keeping to the Provincial Museum of Lérida from the town of Son del Pino in the valley of the river Noguera Pallaresa. The retable was evidently dedicated to Our Lord, and the preserved parts comprise, from the main body, the Flagellation, Via Dolorosa, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension (Fig. 164) and, from the predella, which appears to have been consigned to an assistant, the central piece of the Lamentation over the Dead Christ and lateral compartments of the Nativity and Epiphany. The Via Dolorosa and Ascension are now in the Claramunt Collection at Barcelona, and it may be that the other parts have also been sold to private owners.

The Son Master manipulates a somewhat less mannered and less sophisticated aspect of the style that was employed contemporaneously by the Canillo Master, although apparently not one of his direct disciples. Of not so alert an intellect, he contents himself ordinarily with the old, well established mediaeval compositions of his themes, retaining even the symmetry that his predecessors had sought in their arrangements and lapsing for the most part into dullness in this phase of his art. When he comes to the Crucifixion, however, he rather transcends his complacent traditionalism. He impressively fills the space by no more than the three forms of the sufferers relieved against an entirely conventionalized background, with only two large and symmetrically placed skulls at the bottom to symbolize the landscape of Golgotha, and he rises in the isolated figures of the Saviour and the two thieves to a surprising expressiveness in the differentiation of their separate reactions to the tragedy. Through a curious atavism, also, he resuscitates something of the gentle and placid spirit that breathes through the production of his Catalan forerunners of some one hundred and fifty years before, the Serras. Several of the actors

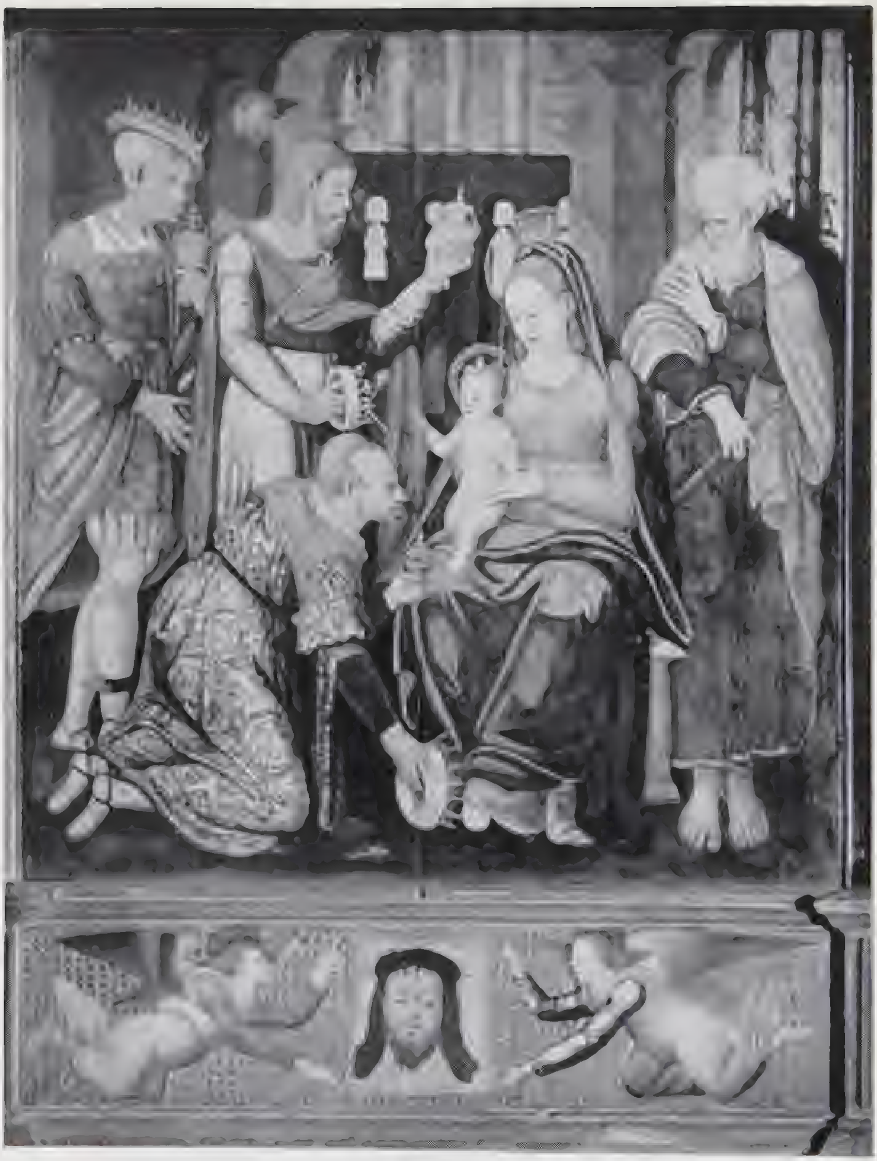

FIG. 165. THE SON MASTER. RETABLE OF THE EPIPHANY. MUSEUM OF CATALAN ART, BARCELONA
(*Photo. Mas.*)

in the Via Dolorosa resemble so closely those of the Canillo Master's follower who did the retable at Nahuja that at times one gets the feeling, doubtless erroneously, that he may have been aided in this compartment by its author.

It was at a felicitous moment in his career that the Son Master created a large Epiphany, with a predella of its own depicting the veronica upheld by two flying angels, which from the parish church of Cubélls, northeast of Lérida, long since entered the Museum of Catalan Art at Barcelona (Fig. 165).[33] Among many stylistic identities, we may cite especially the exactly similar mode of modelling and of the application of the pigments in the faces, the analogy of the type of the standing Caucasian Magus and of the Christ of the veronica to several of the Apostles in the Ascension as well as to the redeemed thief in the Crucifixion, and even the similarity of the rayed haloes. Since an assistant on a retable closely reflects the manner of the head of a shop, we may call into service for proof also the resemblances of the Holy Child and of St. Joseph to the corresponding participants in the rendering of the Epiphany in the Son predella.

At my sole visit to Cubélls I failed to see, or at least to record in my notes, another work in the parish church by the Son Master, which is therefore known to me only in a photograph of the Mas Archive (Fig. 166). All that this reproduction includes is, first, a lateral section of a retable with paintings of the Ascension and Assumption, and, second, a bit of the central compartment containing a statue, the subject or period of which the photograph is not extensive enough to disclose; nor have I been able to ascertain the themes of the other sections or whether the altarpiece survived the havoc of the civil war. The photograph, however, is quite sufficient to reveal the Son Master's craft. The composition for the Ascension is somewhat varied in the retable from which the Master takes his name;

---

[33] Quite independently of me Don Diego Angulo (*Archivo español de arte*, XVII, 1944, p. 327, n. 2) has perceived the interrelationship of the Cubélls Epiphany and the Son retable, but he describes the author of the latter as only an inferior member of the shop of the man who executed the former. I cannot but think that, in thus refusing to see the same artist in the two monuments, he is influenced by comparing with the Cubélls Epiphany, not the main body of the Son retable, but its predella, in which I have acknowledged the collaboration of an assistant. A comparison of the treatment of the Epiphany in the predella with the version from Cubélls is particularly unflattering for this assistant, but the painter of the retable's main body seems to me the equal of the author of the Cubélls picture in drawing, color, and the essentials of his craft (not to speak, here in the note, of the stylistic affinities), although at Cubélls he perhaps exerted himself to a greater degree.

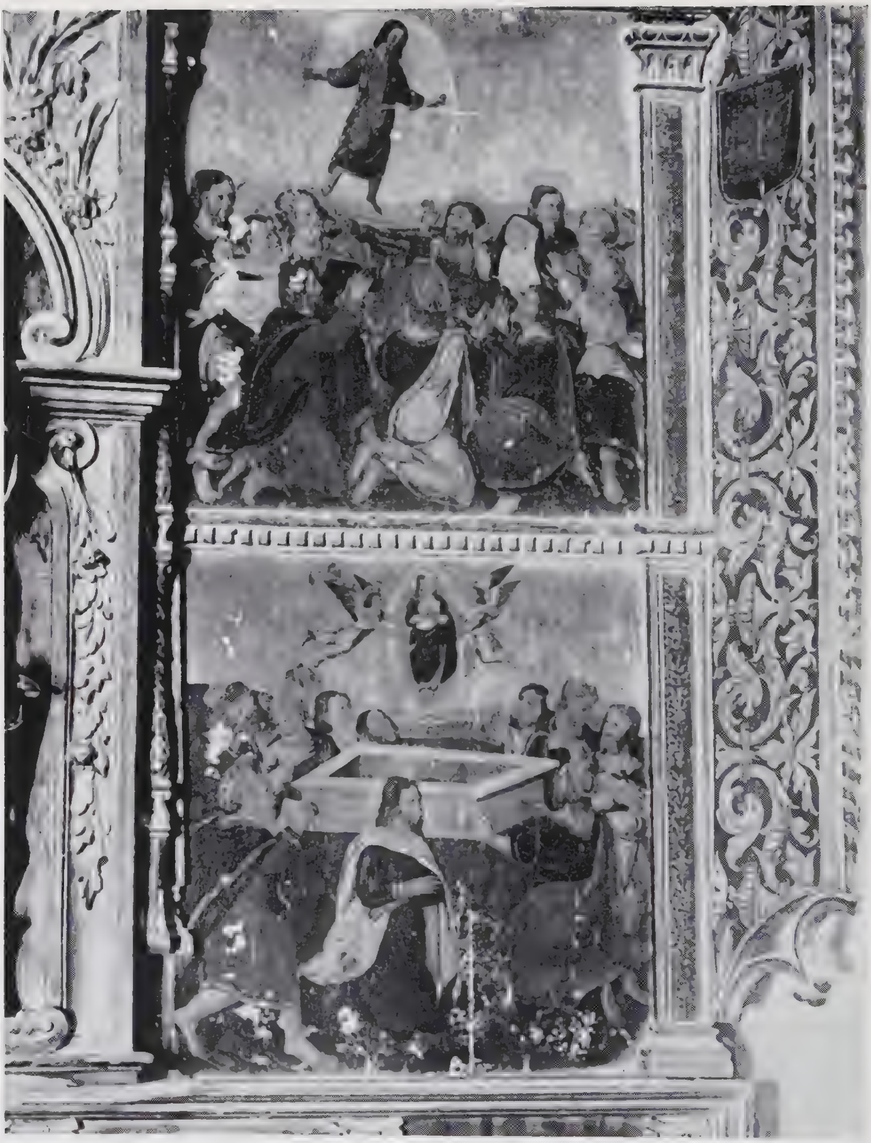

Fig. 166. THE SON MASTER. ASCENSION AND ASSUMPTION, SECTION OF RETABLE. PARISH CHURCH, CUBÉLLS
(*Photo. Mas*)

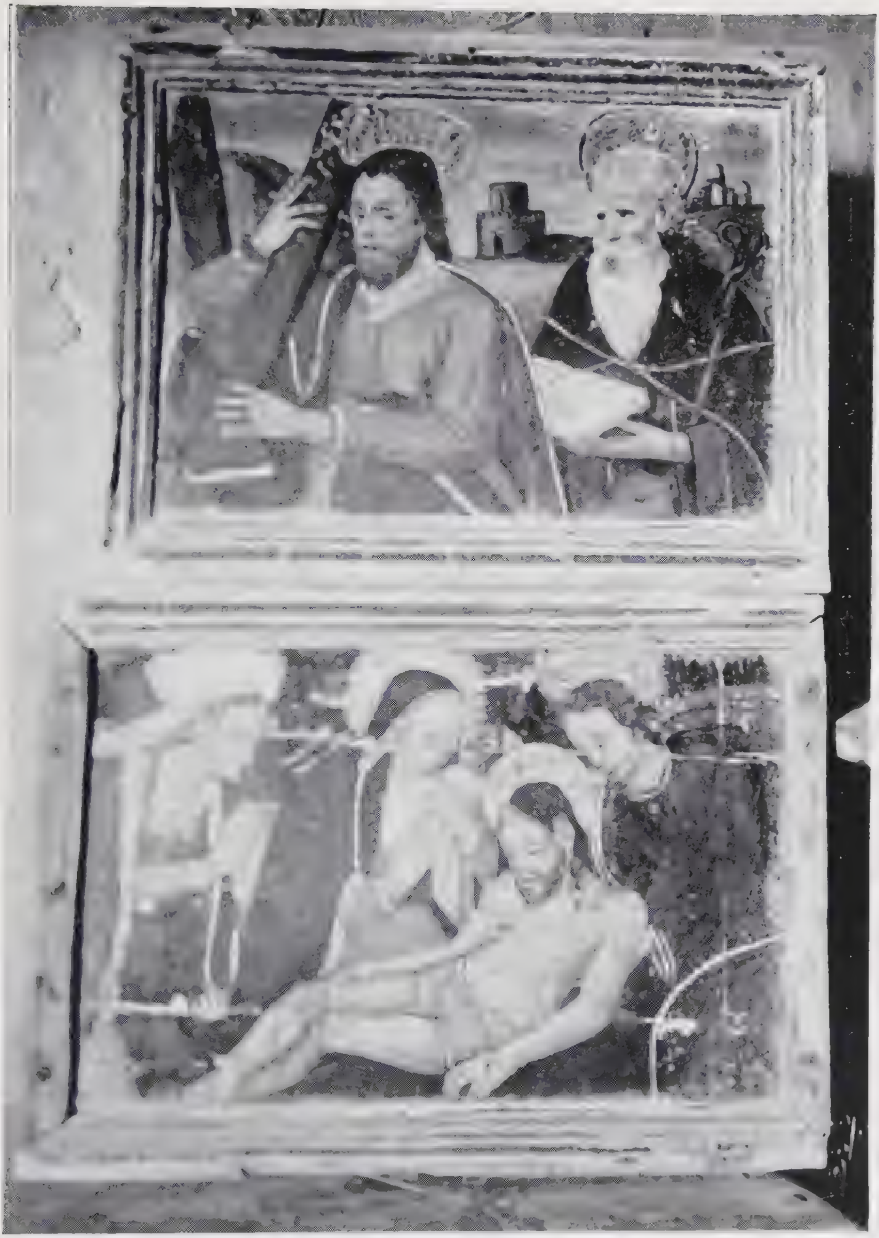

Fig. 167. THE SON MASTER. STS. ANDREW, ANTHONY ABBOT, AND LAMENTATION OVER THE DEAD CHRIST. PARISH CHURCH, ALBELDA

(*Photo. Mora*)

but otherwise the two Cubélls scenes exhibit his types, postures, and his haloes in their most characteristic phases.

Together with panels of the fifteenth century that have concerned us in volume VII and with important works of the Aragonese Sijena Master that will demand much of our attention in volume XIII, the church at Albelda, north of Lérida, contains, or at least contained before the civil war, two pieces of a predella by the Son Master, one representing the Lamentation over the Dead Christ and the other showing half-lengths of Sts. Andrew and Anthony Abbot (Fig. 167). The Virgin and holy woman at the left reproduce pretty closely the correspondingly placed figures in the Lamentation of the retable of Son del Pino; the nearest analogue for the Christ is perhaps the redeemed thief in the same retable; the St. Andrew is a recurrent type in the Son Master's production; and the St. Anthony finds a counterpart in the St. Joseph of the Cubélls Epiphany.

THIS REFERENCE BOOK MAY
CIRCULATE
FOR THREE DAYS.

REFERENCE
768.46
P845h
v.12, pt.1

POST, C.R.
A history of Spanish
painting.

[illegible]

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
3 3311 02133 0149